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Evil God Average

Contents

【First Half – Book of Evil】 4
【Book of Evil – Side Stories】 168
【Second Half - Book of God】 237
【Book of God – Side Stories】 ~incomplete~ 426

Evil God Average

【First Half – Book of Evil】

Chapter 1 – A Simple Wish

The part about my appearance that I like the most is my hair.
It's black hair that's common to Japanese people, but I don't slack up on the maintainance, and when I comb through it it's smooth too.
That it wouldn't be an exaggeration to call it the representative example of 'glossy black like the wet feathers of a crow' is something that I'm secretly proud of.

Then conversely, if you were to ask me what part of my appearance I hate the most, then I'd immediately reply that it's my eyes.
I'm often told by the few friends I have that even though I'm a bishoujo in every way, the looks of my eyes completely wastes it.
But in my opinion――――

"I quite like those eyes of yours.
They're muddy… like they hold all the evils of the world, those eyes of yours."
it's not bad enough to warrant being told *this*… Probably.
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Even though there wasn't a single light in this pitch black place, I could clearly see this boy with long black hair.
He was a perfect bishounen, or so I'd like to say, but he had eyes as cruel――――no, eyes even *crueller*-looking than mine.
Before I knew it, I had found myself in this place, and he who had appeared there one-sidedly declared to me,
"I'm going to have you go to another world".

"…Don't wanna."

"I don't care about your opinion."

Jerk.
Inside, I'm annoyed enough that veins should be bulging, but my expression didn't change.

I don't really like my own lack of expressiveness if I do say so myself, but right now I'm thankful for it.
It's obvious that picking a fight head on with somebody clearly abnormal is really too risky.
Being told "I'm going to have you go to another world." in this clearly abnormal place, I wonder if this means that this boy is a god or something like that.
But still, I don't get it.

"Why me?"

"I quite like those eyes of yours.
They're muddy… like they hold all the evils of the world, those eyes of yours."

They're not bad enough to warrant being told *this*.
And I don't want to hear that from *you*.
Another vein swelled up on my forehead. Only in my mind, though.
"But to think that you could stay sane even facing me directly. You really do have what I expected you did."

Was there a possibility that I'd go insane?
It seems that it was a really casual close call.

"Well, since this is happening because of my own circumstances, I'll help you out a little. Physical ability, the power of magic, and an item box are the default, so I'll grant you one more wish aside from those."

Leaving physical ability aside, "magic" and an "item box"?
Just where on earth am I being thrown into?
And moreover, even if you suddenly say "wish"————

"It can be anything, you know? For example, I could make your chest larger."

Are you saying that I'm flat…? I can't really deny it, but that's none of your business.
Honestly speaking there was a part of me that was swayed by that, but I get

the feeling that if I nod then I'll have lost in various ways.
And moreover, asking to modify the body that I got from my parents is unfilial.

"Then, could it be you don't wish for anything?"

"Make my eyes and atmosphere "normal" please."

Eh? "Is it okay to do that to the body that you got from your parents?" you ask?
That's that, and this is this.
Having a small chest isn't really a good or bad thing, but my eyes and atmosphere have actually caused me harm.

Since I was small, because of these eyes and this atmosphere, people around me have been pointlessly afraid of me.
Even though it's not like I was going to do anything to them, once our eyes met, everybody looked away.
Even when I approached a famous delinquent senpai, he bolted away.
There have even been times when yakuza-ey people with punch perms dogeza'd before me.

""Normal"?"

"It's fine even if it's not special, but I'd like you to at least make it "average"."

"Hm~mm, well whatever. I'll grant that wish of yours. Well then, off you go."

Together with that line, from the boy before my eyes came an aura of darkness that was so black that it swallowed everything else.
My body was enveloped by that aura, and I felt my consciousness receding.

Ahh, it's too late now, but if possible I'd like one more thing.

At least give me some clothing.

Chapter 2 – An Average Conclusion

Before I knew it, I was in a forest.
The surrounding thick trees and flowering plants grew densely, and although I could tell from the light seeping between the leaves of the trees that it was daytime, the place was still dim and dark.
After finding myself face down on the ground, I lifted my face and looked around. Confirming that I was alone, I stood up.
I brushed away the dirt and leaves that were stuck to the front of my body.

In the end, that god(provisional) didn't give me clothes.
Would you normally throw out a naked maiden even as a joke?
There are lots of stories about being thrown into another world in manga and novels, but I've never heard of treatment as terrible as this.
I can't even enter a town like this, and I can't carelessly use the highway either.
Or more like, I'm really glad that I'm in the middle of the forest.

For now, even if there's nobody around, I'd like to at least find something to cover myself up with, but I clearly have nothing on me.
Even when I looked around, I couldn't even find a leaf big enough to cover up with.
While I was at a loss, I suddenly recalled what that god(provisional) said.
If I remember correctly, besides my wish, he gave me physical abilities, the power of magic, and an item box… item box?
If it has storehouse powers like the things you often see in games, then mightn't there be something inside?
But, I don't know how to use it.
Well, for now…

"Item box."

When I gave chanting the name a try, I found a half-transparent display screen appear before my eyes.

Short Dagger　× 1
Leather Robe　× 1

Ooh, it had things inside.
They clearly sound like beginners items, but at this point I don't really care.
There was the clothing that I so desperately wanted.
I have to get it out no matter what.
I tried touching the corresponding area but it was only visible and untouchable.
It seems that I can't interact with it like a touch panel.
When I tried thinking *'Robe, come out~'* I found that a dark brown robe suddenly appeared from my shadow.
Huh? This shadow was my item box?
It seems like an incredibly villain-ey action, but let's leave that aside for now and put on the robe.
It feels rough and cheap, and I'm still just as naked inside so it's all breezy.
But for now I've managed to cover myself, so I let out a sigh of relief… In my mind.
Since I could calm down now, I decided to investigate the display before my eyes.
Because I took out the robe, the contents only listed the short dagger now.
As a test, I picked up a stone by my foot, and while thinking about putting it away, I dropped it above my shadow.
The stone was completely swallowed up by the shadow, and the display now had the addition of 『A normal stone× 1 』.

"…"

Next I thought about closing the item box, and the display suddenly vanished.
With the display closed, when I concentrated on bringing the stone out, the stone appeared from the shadow.
When I thought about putting the stone away again, the stone just sank into the shadow.
Hmm, it seems that even without the display open, as long as I know what's inside, I can bring it out.
Since I don't know what might happen, I decided to bring out the short dagger and hold it in my right hand.

From what's happened so far, it looks like this is a world with a game-like system.
In that case…

"Status."

Just as I expected, a display different from the one before appeared.

Name: Anri
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 17
Job: Mage
Level: 1
Title: Child of the Evil God
Mana: 3031504
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
– Item Box (Lv.4)
Equipment:
– Short Dagger
– Fur Robe

There were so many things I wanted to tsukkomi that I didn't know where to start, but first of all there's one thing I'd like to say.

You got it wrong.
My name 安里 is the surname Yasuzato.
It's not the given name Anri.

Wanting to do something about this unilaterally revised name of mine, I tried touching the area on the display, but just like the item box menu from before, I couldn't touch it.
Even when I concentrated and thought *'Change~'* nothing happened at all.

After some trial and error, I found that I couldn't do anything about it, and giving up, I turned my gaze to the other entries.
My race and sex, and age are fine, and as for my level I haven't really done anything so being Lv.1 is natural.
I was arbitrarily made into a mage, but I don't think of myself as the physical type, so it's not like I have a problem with this either.
But the value of my mana points or whatever is weird.
No, well, I don't know the average value for this so I can't say for sure, but it looks like the numbers are clearly abnormal.

And moreover, there's something even more worrying.

"Child of the Evil God?"

Why do I have such a sinister title attached?
The only god I know is that god(provisional) that threw me into this world.
Was that guy an evil god?
Well, the guy had even more stagnant looking eyes than me, so no matter how you look at him he doesn't seem to be something holy, so if you told me that I'd believe it.

When I turned my eyes to the title, that area went into a close-up and showed an additional explanation.

<Child of the Evil God>
By the power of the Evil God, a divine child who has been conferred the blessings of darkness.

…*
…*
What the heck does that evil god want to do by giving me such a chuunibyou setting?

…*
…*
Now then, let's leave the escapism at that, since it's about time to turn my eyes to the problematic area.

Under the skills column are “Evil God Aura” and “Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority”.

Taking ‘mystic eyes’ to be a change to my eyes, and ‘aura’ as ‘atmosphere’, I could tell that these corresponded to the things I wished for.
But I’m sure that I asked him to make it “normal”.
And despite that, for some reason it ended up like this, so I can’t accept it.
Turning my eyes to the skills column, I had the additional explanation appear.

<Evil God Aura>
The repulsive aura emitted by the Evil God.
Emitting this aura alone has no physical effects, but those within the area of effect will experience terror.
Lv.5 is the level of an average Evil God, and has enough power to send a dragon running frantically.
Additionally, because humans have a weaker sense than monsters, the effect on humans is lower.

Type: Passive Skill
On/Off: Unavailable
High/Low: Unavailable
However, the effectiveness will fluctuate based on the user’s mental condition.

…*
<Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority>
Mystic eyes that confer terror upon those that meet its gaze.
Lv.5 is the level of an average Evil God, and has enough power to have a Demon King dogeza and beg for his life.

Type: Passive Skill
On/Off: Unavailable
High/Low: Unavailable
However, the effectiveness will fluctuate based on the user’s mental condition.

..*

Lv.5 is the level of an average Evil God――――
an average Evil God――――
average――――

Wha-, who the heck said to make me normal “with an evil god as the standard”!?

Aren’t I done for?
This is obviously worse than in my old world.
Honestly, I’m afraid to look in a mirror.
Having come to this, considering that I’ll be kept at a distance by the people around me, it doesn’t seem like I’ll be able to live properly from now on.

My hands and knees collapsed to the ground… in my mind.

After being depressed for a while, I pulled myself together, and turned my eyes to the remaining skills.
I swore in my heart that one day I would smack that evil god though.

<Divine Enchantment>
Things touched will be granted the divine protection of the Evil God.
It’s a high level ‘mana bestowal’ skill, and though the mana bestowal is temporary, the divine protection is eternal.
The target can be both organic or inorganic, but in the case of enchanting a living being, the target is required to accept.
Lv.7 is the level of an intermediate god.

Type: Passive Skill
On/Off: Unavailable
High/Low: Available
When used consciously the target can be instantly enchanted, but the unconscious passive use requires contact for an hour.

..*
<Abnormal Status Resistance>
Grants high resistance to poisons, confusion and other such abnormal statuses.
At Lv.6 even a Demon King class attack can be rendered powerless.

…*
<Darkness Magic>
A system of magic that uses the great power of the darkness.
A system exceptional at reducing the power of the opponent and attacking.
The effectiveness will fluctuate based on time of day, and displays its maximum power at night.
Lv.6 is the level of a Great Demon King.

…*
<Item Box>
A storage space with enormous capacity.
Only non-living things can be placed inside.
Additionally, things stored in the item box will not be bestowed divine protection.
Lv. 4 has the storage space of a house.

…*
The item box is fine, but everyone else is as sinister as it gets.
The abnormal status resistance seems decent at a glance… but I can't help but see this line-up of skills as things a boss monster would have.
I can't really imagine 'divine enchantment' from the description, but the divine protection of an evil god is probably nothing decent.

I think I'll have a look at my status again… What the heck is with all this? It screams 'last boss'…

..*
『Fur Robe has been granted divine protection.』

..*
?

I suddenly heard a voice from somewhere, and in the next instant, my body was engulfed by darkness.
Well, more accurately speaking, not me but the robe I was wearing.
When the darkness cleared away as though being sucked in, what I found there wasn't a dark brown robe but a jet black robe that gave off a feeling of being high class.

Moreover, under my robe there's even a dress… As expected there's no underwear though.

If I guess based on the voice from earlier, could this be the effect of the divine protection skill?
According to the skill explanation, when it's used unconsciously I need to be in contact with something for an hour.
I don't have a watch so I can't accurately tell the time, but it seems like it's been that long since I took the leather robe out of the item box.
At any rate, I'm thankful.
Thanks to that, I've gone from an exhibitionist naked-robe style to a more decent outfit.
I'm sorry for thinking that there was nothing dece――――

..*
『Short Dagger has been granted divine protection.』

..*
Just like the time with the robe, darkness gathered around the dagger in my right hand.
When the darkness cleared, there in my hand was a sinister jet black tantou.

Equipment:
– Tantou of the Wicked Demon [New]
– Black Clothes of the Evil God [New]

<Tantou of the Wicked Demon> [New]
A tantou that possesses such terrifying cutting ability that it can tear through even steel armour like paper.
Additional effects of poison, paralysis, confusion, sleep, muteness, instant death.
Is a cursed equipment that can not be removed.

<Black Clothes of the Evil God> [New]
The robe granted to a high level priest of the Evil God.
Immune to four elements, absorbs dark element, and on top of having resistance against the light element, the physical defence is also high.

However, while equipped, user takes damange from healing magic.
Is a cursed equipment that can not be removed.

…*
It really *was* nothing decent.

Chapter 3 – A Common Development

A suspicious girl clad from head to toe in pitch black walked wordlessly through the forest… It's me though.
I experienced various shocks, but dwelling on them won't get me anywhere, so I decided to do something else for now.
At any rate, what I really want right now is reach a human settlement.
Based on what I've seen from the skills earlier, I can't really feel hopeful.
But even so, if I stay here, my only choice is to starve to death so there's no helping it.
In the skill explanation it said *"the effect on humans is lower"* so I have no choice but to bet on that.
Moreover, I was worried about the curse of the tantou and robe, but what they meant was "if you drop it, it'll return to you after certain amount of time" and "even if you try to equip something else, it'll fly off".
I gave putting the tantou in my item box for a try, and found that the putting away part was possible.
But after thirty minutes it flew out on its own and settled itself into my right hand.
And moreover, while my hand was empty I tried to pick up a branch about the size of a wooden sword, but this time the tantou immediately flew out and knocked the branch out of my hand.
…Because it looked like it was jealous, I ended up finding it a little cute.
Also, it was fine if I picked up a small branch that wouldn't become a weapon.

As you'd expect, even if nobody was around I didn't feel like stripping, so I haven't tested the robe yet but it's probably the same.
But this means that I won't be able to wear other clothing.
I don't have a habit of dressing up, but I'm against having only the one suit.
Let's sincerely pray that there's a way of dispelling the curse.

Because I didn't have shoes, I had no choice but to walk barefoot.
At first I walked timidly, afraid that rocks or sticks would cut my feet, but mysteriously there was no pain.
It might be that the physical ability that the evil god spoke about isn't just athletic ability, but includes toughness and stuff as well.

Once I considered that this unknown body of mine might not be human, the dread surged forth, but I've decided not to think about it for now.

But wow, my field of vision sure is terrible.
Because of all the thickly grown trees, there's nothing but blind spots.
I don't show it on my face, but inside I'm scared that an animal will suddenly jump out from the shade of a tree and attack me.
No, if it's just a normal animal then that might still be better.
From the fantasy-ness of this world, it's plenty possible that a monster or something will appear instead.

The aimlessly wandering girl is suddenly surrounded by a pack of orcs and goblins.
The pitiful and unfortunate bishoujo was made into their plaything and…
Mn, impossible, huh?
Despite myself, I accidentally thought up such an impossible delusion.
If I could have such a heroine-like development, to begin with, it wouldn't have been odd for me to have had a steamy romance in my old life.
But I've never even gotten close to getting a boyfriend, and it was all underlings arbitrarily pledging their loyalty to me.
Mn, thinking about it again, it's impossible, right?
Even considering my skills, I can't imagine anything except a scene of orcs and goblins waiting upon me.
I don't want to experience such a shocking event either, so let's hurry up and get out of the forest.

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I was making good progress through the foliage when suddenly the trees around me disappeared.
I could see a roughly 20 metre clearing between the trees.
Though it wasn't paved, it was probably a road, and along the flattened dirt of this road that stretched to my left and right were a number of wheel, hoof and foot prints.

And on the right hand side was a carriage that had stopp-… stopped?
Feeling doubt about a carriage that went out of its way to stop in the middle of the forest, I looked more closely and found that around the carriage were

about ten men, clearly nobody decent, surrounding the carriage with swords and clubs in hand.
Wai-, could that carriage possibly be in the middle of being attacked by bandits?
And of all things, right here, right now, as I leave the forest?
Why do I have to encounter such a cliched development? It couldn't be that this is some scheme of that evil god, could it?

There are still a lot of things I don't understand, but for now I have to think about what I'm going to do.
For now, I have three choices――――

(1) Anri-chan with her strong sense of justice, rushes to the aid of the carriage, driven by her sense of righteous indignation.
(2) Anri-chan who obeys the strong, butters up the bandits and attacks the carriage together with them.
(3) Anri-chan who follows the creed of letting sleeping dogs lie, decides that she didn't see a thing, and runs away.

Before I knew it I was using my revised name… Incidentally, I'm picking choice (3) of course.
Eh? Isn't this where you're supposed to pick (1), you ask?
Don't joke around, I have absolutely no intention of fighting.
As a cultural clubs-type person right down to the bone, I really wish that you wouldn't hope for such sports clubs-type stuff from me.
And moreover, nonchalantly strolling in front of that group of brutes would be like a sheep jumping into a pack of wolves.
For the same reason I'll say no to (2), and to begin with, I'm not so inhumane that I'd support the bandits.
Even (3) is inhumane, you say? No, no, telling a feeble level 1 girl to fight more than 10 bandits should be what's inhumane.
To you inside the carriage――――probably a princess, or a merchant or something――――sorry, but please just accept this as your own bad luck, and don't get me wrapped up in this.

I quietly began moving back into the forest so that the bandits and the person in the carriage wouldn't notice.
Going by novel cliches, right now would be the moment that I step on a

branch and draw attention to myself due to the sound, but I'm not going to make such a mistake.
Even while keeping my eyes in their direction, I'm paying attention to my feet… Geh-, our eyes met.

"Hii!?"

The bandit furthest back; in other words, the man closest to me, looked in my direction and let out a shriek.
Hey-, oi.

"W-, What is it?"

"A-, A woman? No…"

Like a chain effect, the other men who looked in my direction backed away.

"No…", you say? You know, I *am* technically a woman you know?
Biologically speaking.
"…"

"…"

At about 30 metres in between, the bandits and I wordlessly faced each other.
A strained silence filled the area.

"…"
Unable to bear the silence, I unconsciously thought *'anything is fine, just say* ***something****'* so I opened my mouth.
But that instant, the strained tension erupted.
"UWAHHHHHHHHHH————!!!"

"S-, SAAAVE MEEEEEEEEE————!!!"

"W-, WAIT FOR MEEEE!"

At that moment, the bandits fled in all directions.
Completely dumbfounded, I just gazed at their retreating figures.

..*
When I snapped out of it, the bandits were already long gone, and only the stopped carriage was there.
Wait, I didn't notice earlier, but looking closely there's still one man by the carriage.
I thought that it might have been a bandit who was late to escape, but he was wearing clothing different from the bandits I just saw.
He was probably the owner of the carriage, and was just about to be attacked by the bandits.
It was just barely in time, but it seems that things ended without him being killed.

Enexpectedly, I ended up saving him. But I wonder what's wrong with him.
From what I saw of the bandits' response from earlier, there's no doubt that the skill works just fine on humans as well.
Meaning that the chance that this man is afraid as well is high.
Honestly speaking I just want to pass on anything that'll gouge at my heart any more, but I might be able to come into contact with him amiably, so passing up this chance is a waste.
Indeed. I didn't do a thing and the bandits just ran on their own, but you could say that to this guy I'm his saviour.
If I speak to him amicably, I'm sure it'll be okay.
Thinking this, I approached the man.
Oops, I'd better put this tantou in my item box so that I don't accidentally provoke him.
Also, smiling is important for developing friendly relations. Smile, smile.

However, when I desperately put on a smile, the already pale man's complexion grew noticeably worse.
Did I fail somehow?
Tilting my head in confusion, the man flung the leather bag in his hand towards m-…HEBU-!?

"S-, SAVE ME GOD————!!!"

It seems that something metal was inside the leather bag, so something hard and heavy smacked into my face.
While I was confused at this sudden abuse, the man frantically jumped onto the coachman's spot and pulled the reins, and hurried the carriage away.
The carriage ran away like it was sliding, and travelled down the forest road just like that, before finally disappearing.

Still holding the leather bag that dropped from my face into my hands, I just stood frozen there.

… … … … … …It hurts.

Chapter 4 – Relief

After experiencing that heartrending event of being run away from by both bandits and their victim, I stood stock still for a while, but I pulled byself together and decided to have a look at what was inside the bag that was flung at me earlier.
Just as I had guessed from that painful experience earlier, the inside of the bag was stuffed with gold coins.
I don't know what the currency in this world is worth, but there are quite a lot inside, and I think it might be a fair amount.
…The pain was proportional though.

When I counted the contents more carefully, I found that there were 5 gold coins, 48 silver coins, and 114 copper coins.
To be hit in the face with such a heavy thing, you did well in getting out unscathed, me.
I'm not sure, but it's probably that the carriage owner from before was just about to beg the bandits for his life with this money.
And then I appeared, and he threw it at me without checking what was inside…
Thinking about it again, I'm really getting a little irritated.
Though it wasn't intention, I *was* his saviour, but he threw something at me and ran away, so my anger is justified.
And so, I've decided to keep this money as reparations.
It doesn't seem like I'll have a chance to give it back after all.
Having tidied this matter up in my mind, I put a few silver and copper coins into the pocket of my robe, and toss the rest into my item box leather bag and all.

Now then, what am I going to do from now on.
From what I saw of the reactions earlier, even if I arrive at a town, I think the possibility of them letting me in is low.
It's still better if they just get scared and run; if things go badly, I might even get attacked.
But staying away from civilisation like this is impossible.

I don't have any survival skills, and even if I did, it's dubious as to whether they would work in this other world.
In the end, I have no choice but to get to a town somehow in order to survive.
Can't I control these annoying skills somehow…?

Wait, hang on?
The bandits and the carriage owner looked scared after they met eyes with me.
In other words, can't we say that the fear is limited to the effect of the mystic eyes, and the aura alone doesn't have that much of an effect?
I accidentally thought of them as a set, but the weakened effect against humans was only written for the Evil God Aura, and it didn't necessarily affect the Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority.
If the Evil God Aura doesn't seem like it'll be that much of a problem, and only the Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority are an issue, then there are still ways I can cope.
Since making eye contact is the activation condition, the effect won't activate if I make it so that our eyes don't meet.
Fortunately the robe has a hood, so if I pull it down enough that it hides my eyes, I'll just be a person with a slightly eerie atmosphere… at least I hope that's how it is.

I can't deny that there's a lot of wishful thinking mixed up into there, but given that I don't have any other choices, I've decided to follow my original plan and look for a town.
First of all is the problem of which way I should head for now, but――――

"…Let's go this way."

I've decided to go not in the direction that the carriage escaped in earlier, but to go the opposite way.
I think there should be human settlements in the direction that the carriage came from as well as where it was going, but I don't know which is closer.
The probability is an even 50:50.
In that case, considering just in case that I meet with that carriage owner again, it seems like it would be nothing but trouble, so let's go in the opposite direction.

And like that, I once again began to walk.

◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

I don't have a watch so I can't tell the time accurately, but I think after walking for about two hours, the forest ended and I reached a wide grass plain.
If it was the me from before, then I would have been unable to move from the exhaustion long ago, but because of the reinforcement of my physical abilities I'm not even sweating.
The highway stretched out through the plain, and in the far distance I could see a town.
It was surrounded by a wall, and seemed to be quite a big town.
It's just what I can see, but it seems that I'll need to walk for another hour to get there.
After looking about the plain and confirming that there weren't any dangerous looking animals, I headed to the town.

When I got close to the town, I could see that at the end of the highway was a small building set as the entrance, and in front of it stood a few people and their carriages.
I quietly added myself to the end of the line, and listened as best I could for information.
Since I know nothing about this world's common sense, I don't even know the procedures of how to get into town after all.
The merchants riding their carriages showed the gate guards a card, and their carriage underwent a check before passing through.
As for those walking on foot, some of them showed a card just like the merchants, and some of them paid money and received a wooden card.
Those cards are probably identification papers of some sort.
But though there seem to be those that don't have them, in that case it seems that they pay a silver coin before being let through.
I'm worried as to whether this flawed system will be alright, but to me it's convenient.
While squeezing a silver coin I had in my robe pocket, I waited for my turn to come.

"Next… Just one person?"

“Yes.”

It was my turn now so I walked before the guard.
Inside, my heart was pounding, but I didn’t let it show.
Thankfully, because the hood was pulled down enough to cover my eyes, it seems that they didn’t get scared.

“A woman huh. Do you have ID?”

“I don’t.”

“Then pay a deposit, and we’ll issue you a temporary ID. The deposit is 1 silver coin.”

Not a toll, but a deposit huh?
I wonder if they’ll give it back when I leave.
I took out a silver coin from my robe pocket, and handed it over.

“We have certainly received it. When you leave the city, return the temporary ID and we’ll return the deposit. Even if you get an official ID when you’re in time, don’t throw away your temporary one.”

“Got it… How would I go about getting an official ID?”

“Did you just come from a country village or something? The fastest way should be to register at the Adventurers Guild and get an Adventurers Card. There’s also the church, and the Merchants Guild, but the former is no good unless you’re a resident or a believer. As for the latter, only merchants can enter so it probably doesn’t have anything to do you with, miss.”

Well, no matter how you look at it, I doubt I look like a merchant.
Since our eyes aren’t meeting I don’t know what kind of expression he’s making, but this guard is quite kind.
The Adventurers Guild, the church, and the Merchants Guild; for now I know that the town has at least these establishments.

“Well then, this is your temporary ID. Make sure not to lose it.”

“Yes.”

Putting the wooden card away in my robe pocket, I went through the gate.

The town was mostly round in shape, and the road stretched from the gate I entered, through to the central plaza, then all the way to the gate at the opposite side.
I don’t know what map direction it is, but from the words of the people walking around me, the gate I entered through was the eastern gate, and there were apparently also western and southern gates.
The northern side doesn’t have a gate, but the estate of this town’s――――which seems to be named Riemer――――governing lord.
The road I’m walking down now, and the one that perpendicularly intersects it at the central plaza seem to be this town’s main roads.
There are stalls and shops lined up along the main roads, and most residences are a little further in from the main roads than the shops are.

While walking I had a peek at the stalls and shops, and checked the value of the currency.
The items in the street stalls didn’t have price tags, and it seems that you need to ask the owner for the price.
On the other hand, the prices in the stores are displayed on wooden tags.

Two of this fruit that’s about the size of my fist is one copper coin.
One piece of bread ranges from one to two copper coins.
The dress-type clothing that’s worn by the people walking around in town is 15 copper coins.
A longsword about a metre long is 1 silver and 50 copper.
Wooden shields are 50 copper, while bronze shields are about 1 silver, marked down to 90 copper.

It seems that 100 copper coins has the same value as 1 silver coin.
Right now I haven’t seen a place that uses gold coins yet, so I don’t know how much it’s worth.
The things at the front of the shops are probably cheap goods, and the more expensive goods that would use a gold coin are probably further in the store.
Just looking at the foods sold, 1 copper coin seems to be worth about 100

Yen, but because the prices are varied, it would probably be better just to avoid thinking about how to simply convert it.

Concluding my price investigation, I entered a clothing shop to buy the things that I needed to buy before anything else.

High waisted panties were 6 coppers each.
Babydoll-like underwear were 10 coppers each.
Low-heeled boots were 9 coppers a pair.

I bought three of each underwear type, and a pair of boots, so in total it was 57 coppers altogether, and when I paid with a silver coin, I got 43 coppers in return.
I couldn't find a bra.
In order to defend my honour I should say this to let you know, but what I couldn't find wasn't just my size, but bras altogether.
Let's pretend that I didn't see those bustier-type underwear hanging in the store.
Since I couldn't put on the underwear in a place like this, I patiently bore with this breezy sensation for a while longer, and put on only the boots.
Between *"not wearing them"* and *"getting found out that I wasn't wearing them"*, which is better I wonder… It's a hard question, but I'll go with not being found out.
By the time I left the clothing store, the sun had set a lot, and the beautiful evening sun lit up the town.
The stores in the area were beginning to close up sa well, and people were leaving for the road home.
It seems that this is a town that has an early night.
Thinking about it, there are no street lights, so once the sun sets the town will become dark.
The only places that do business at night are probably only taverns and slightly indecent shops.
I'd better quietly find myself a place to sleep or else.
Having decided that, I began walking down the main road as I searched for an inn.

While I was relying on the pictures on the signboards to search, I found a few inns.

Most of them seemed to have taverns on the first floor and guest rooms on the second, and most of them had a signboard with a bed and a signboard with a mug lined up alongside each other.
Amongst those I… didn't choose one, and instead decided to try and find an inn *without* a tavern.
It's just that taverns and the like just kind of smell of trouble, after all.
"Oh, a guest? Welcome, this is an inn."

An obasan around 40 years old spoke to me after I opened the dor.
Speaking of which, I haven't really noticed it up until now, but for some reason it seems that we can understand each other.

"How much is one night?"

"One night is 1 silver, breakfast is 5 coppers, dinner is 10 coppers, and a tub of hot water is 5 coppers."

Hot water?
Ahh, in place of a bath?
I wonder if getting in the water isn't mainstream.
It's a bit of a shock.

"Five nights, with the food and water too please."

Saying that, I handed over 6 silver coins.

"Got it, your room is on the second floor, the final door on the right. This is the key. Do you want to eat straight away?"

"Yes, if that's possible."

"Right away. I'll prepare it now so wait in whichever seat you'd like."

After I received the key with a wooden plate attached, I sat in a sat to the side of the dining room and waited for the food to come.

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After I finished eating, I received the tub of hot water, and climbing the stairs, I entered the room they gave me.
By the way, dinner was bread, stew with plenty of vegetables, and fruit for dessert.
It was simple, but delicious.
Opening the door with the key I received, I found that it was a room about 6 tatami, with a bed and a table set.
After entering and locking the door, I placed the hot water tub on the floor, and flopped onto the bed face up.
The ceiling with its wood grain entered my vision, and this unfamiliar sight really drove home that I was in another world.
Because of how desolate I was feeling, tears involuntarily blurred my vision… is not what happened, but it's a fact that my heart is filled to the brim with anxiety.
It seemed that I would fall into an endless loop of depression, so I got up because I felt like I would fall asleep if I continued lying there, and after checking once more that the door was locked, I took off the robe and dress I was wearing, and placed them on the bed.
I soaked the cloth that I received alongside the tub of water, and then wrang it out, and wiped myself clean starting with my hair, then my upper body, and finally my lower body.
Once I was more or less refreshed, I put on the underwear that I just bought, and put on the dress that I had tossed onto the bed.
I'm about to go to sleep, so it should be fine even if I don't put the robe on.
The blanket is thin and it's a little cold, so I draped the robe on top though.

It's an hour where the sun has only just set, but perhaps because lots of things happened and I was tired, my eyelids felt heavy. There's nothing to do anyway, so I should just hurry up and sleep already. Thinking this, I crawled into bed.

Chapter 5 – Holy Place

The light shining into the room brought my consciousness back.
It seems that today I woke up before my alarm clock woke me up.
Since I finally woke up feeling nice for once I didn't want to hear that piercing sound, so still lying down, I reached out my hand to stop it before it rang.
While groping around for the alarm clock that was always by my pillow, my hand touched something hard.
I tried to grab it from above and press the button on the alarm clock… when a sharp pain at the base of my thumb sent me jumping right up.

"Tss-!?"

When I looked at my pained right hand, I found that at a cut ran vertically down the base of my thumb, and blood was oozing from there.
In confusion at the sudden event, I looked at where I had stretched my hand towards earlier, and found that in place of my familiar alarm clock was an ominous black knife lying there.
After looking around the room still confused, I remembered that this wasn't my room.
A six tatami room with a simple table set, and, completely at odds with the rest of the room, a jet black canopy bed.
Right, I was thrown into another world, and made it to this room.

Mn?
That's weird, there's something that feels off about this.
No, I mean, being thrown into another world is off to begin with, or rather it's beyond a level you can just call 'feeling off', but leaving that aside, it feels kind of like last night's scene was a little different, or rather…
While I dragged off the jet black robe that was hard to see atop the black blanket, I frantically tried to work this mind of mine that wouldn't work well having just awoken.
Wai-, black?
Right, the thing that's off about this scene is the bed and blanket.

Last night when I went to sleep, it was supposed to be just a simple wooden bed, with white sheets and a white blanket.
And at some point it changed into a pitch black canopy bed… It couldn't be that I was kidnapped?
No, but the room seems to be the same as the room that I fell asleep in last night.

Still unable to process the situation, the knife from before entered my vision.
Earlier I was wondering why such a knife was in here, but thinking about it carefully, I realised that it might have been the curse.
I put it away in my item box, but because of the curse of being unable to unequip it, it probably flew out while I was sleeping.
Meaning that it's going to be like this every night? Today it ended with just a scratch, but if I don't do something about this I'll probably be seriously injured before long.
While licking my wound, I was at a loss as to what I would do from now on.

Having remembered about the knife, I realised what had probably happened with the bed as well.
While I was sleeping, the divine enchantment had probably activated.
There might have been a voice just like the time with the knife and robe, but unfortunately I was sleeping and apparently missed it.
In other words———

"I've done it now."

Because of the skill, it seems that I accidentally demonically remodelled the bed.
I, wonder if I'll have to reimburse them.
It's become luxurious, so I wonder if they might forgive me.

Despite running into trouble first thing in the morning, I put on my robe and shoes.
Let's just deal with it later.

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After having breakfast I left the inn.
I roughly asked the inn obasan about the placed I wanted to go today, so all that's left is to walk about and search for them.
My goals are two places; the Adventurers Guild and the church.
I want to register at the Adventurers Guild for a Guild Card.
I don't have any intention of proactively going on adventures, but it seems like various things will get annoying without ID after all, and I want to maintain a way of earning money too.
My purpose of going to the church is to dispel the curse.
I experienced trouble this morning too, but I really would like to hurry up and get rid of the curses on this robe and knife.
I'm aware that the idea of 'removing curses = church' is largely influenced by the games I've played, but given that I can't think of anything else there's no choice but to try.
Since the curse really exists, I think there should exist a method to dispel it too after all, and even if the church can't do it, if I talk to them about my problems they'll probably teach me how to approach it.
A helping hand to the lost lambs.

The church was apparently somewhat closer to the inn, so I'll head there first.
Apparently the inn I stayed in is in the western side of town, but the church is in front of the estate of the ruler's residence in the northern side, and the Adventurers Guild is near the eastern gate.
Turning left at the central plaza, I walked northwards along the road that intersected the east-west road.
After walking for a while, I could see a large building before me.
That's probably the estate of the lord of this town.
In that case, does that mean the church is that building whose distinguishing feature are the spires?
I arbitrarily had the image of 'church = cross' but thinking about it carefully, that's only limited to the Christians of my old world, and the churches of this world have no crosses.
Upon walking as far as the entrance, I could see beyond the open doors a dignified room that you could call a holy temple.
Benches were lined up, and there was a podium further in, and a person who appeared to be a priest was currently preaching.

Enshrined inside was a divine looking statue of a goddess, and people were sitting on the benches and offering prayers towards that statue.

Mn, there's no mistake that this is the church.
But still, with such a pure atmosphere, it seems that I can hold some hopes for getting this curse dispelled.
With lightened steps, I headed towards the entrance and went through that do-…MIGYAH-!?
The moment I tried to head through the door I collided face-first into the invisible wall that was there.

Taking a staggered step backwards because of the impact I took to the face, in front of me was a crack in space.
What's, with this?
Finding it strange, I timidly gave it a poke, when the crack widened from where my finger was, and with a light **-pan-** sound, something that was surrounding the church ruptured and disappeared.
"Ah."

Could this possibly be *that*? A barrier or something?
A barrier charged with holy power in order to ward off foreign enemies…
Wai-, no, no, then why did *I* get repelled?
And moreover, with just a light poke it so easily broke too.
"… … … … … … …"

"… … … … … … …"

"… … … … … … …"

"… … … … … … …"

When I happened to glance that way, I found that everybody in the church was looking at me, frozen up.
It seems that the sound of the barrier breaking earlier resounded inside too, and they were paying attention to my every action.
Um~mm, I think that the possibility of the barrier breaking is only at a *'not completely non-existent'* level, but I realised that from an outsider's point of

view, it looked like I had obviously destroyed the barrier.
Now that it's come to this――――
"… … … … … … …Strategic retreat."

I desperately made a smile, and tilted my head in confusion before quickly leaving the scene.

I don't hear any screaming behind me, I don't hear any screaming behind me.
That my hood had been thrown off when I bumped into the barrier was something that I only realised after I made it as far as the central plaza.
Frantically putting my hood back on, I decided to take a breather at a cafe by the plaza.

While sipping the black tea I ordered, I thought about what just happened.
It seems possible that the church had some kind of holy protection cast on it, but why did I have to get repelled by it?
I'm a human, and not a devil or anything… Wai-, is this because of the 『Child of the Evil God』 titlee!?
Mn, I can't think of any other reason after all, and it probably isn't wrong.
Do people with this title get treated as non-humans? So troublesome.
Like I thought, I really do want to give that evil god a punch.

With things as they are, it would probably be better not to go near the church for now.
I had my face seen without a hood on after all, and I accidentally met eyes with them so with the effect of the mystic eyes, it won't turn into anything good.
It seems that for now I have no choice but to give up on the curse removal as well.
While drinking my black tea, I let out a deep sigh.

Chapter 6 – Promise

The door opened with a creak, and I passed through it into the Adventurers Guild.
Looking from the entrance there was a bulletin board on my left, and there were a number of papers that seemed to be requests pinned to them.
On the right side were a number of round tables, and chatting adventurers who seemed to be in parties.
And in front of me was the counter, with a young receptionist staff member who was speaking with an adventurer.
At the counter, besides the person speaking to the reception, there were also about two people lined up behind them, and I decided to line up behind them too.

My turn finally came, so I walked forwards to the counter.

“Welcome to the Adventurers Guild. How can I help you today?”

“I’d like to register.”

“Understood. To register you will have to pay 1 silver coin. Will that be all right?”

I nodded and drew a silver from my robe pocket, and handed it over to the receptionist.

“Well then, please place your hand atop this card.”

After saying that, the receptionist brought out 1 unmarked card and placed it on the couner.
I did as I was told and placed the palm of my right hand above the card.
After leaving it there for about a minute, the card shone.

“Thank you, that will be enough.”

Being told that I removed my hand from the card and found that the card that should have been plain up until just now was now marked with letters.
It seems that part of my status has been written here.

Name: Anri
Race: Human
Sex: Female
Age: 17
Job: Mage
Level: 1

I-, I'm glad it was only a part.
If my title or skills were written here, it might have caused a huge fuss.

"I'll be transcribing what's written on the car——"

"Oi, oi, this little girl wants to become an adventurer? It's the end of the bloody world."

Cutting off the receptionist oneesan's words was a voice from the side.
When I reflexively looked that way, I found that one of the adventurers talking by the tables earlier was now standing there, and walking our way.
He's a large man at around 2 metres, and has a fierce and filthy, thickly bearded face.
Could this be… a 'picking a fight with an OP protagonist' event?

"Oi, oi, Gartz. You're seriously picking a fight with another newbie?"

"Doing this everyyy singleee time. You sure don't get bored, huh."

Wai-, this happens all the time?
It seems that I was just being overly self-conscious. I'm so embarassed that my face is burning up with shame.

"Oi, how 'bout saying something. Don't just stand there wordlessly forever with your face hidden."

Saying that, the bear of a man that picked a fight with me――――Gartz, pulled away my hood with his hands.

“!?”

Gartz who was looking right at my eyes stiffened up, with shock and horror frozen on his face.
Fortunately, his large build was hiding me so it seems that the other people weren’t affected by my mystic eyes.
The next moment, something flew up from below and settled into my hand.

“HII-!?”

When I had a look, I found there the ominous jet black tantou that I got used to yesterday.
It seems that the time limit for leaving it out of my hand has passed.
Seeing me who looked like I was preparing a weapon, Gartz let out a shriek and fell on his backside.
Like that, he backed away to get away from me.
While watching that, I managed to get the hood on and hid my eyes just in time.

“Oi, what’s wrong!?”

Perhaps noticing Gartz’ strange behaviour, one of his comrades who was sitting at a table behind us rushed over to Gartz and placed a hand on his shoulder.

“!? UOOOOAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH――――!!!”

“Ga-!? What the fuck are you doing!?”

Gartz had turned around when a hand was placed on his shoulder, and letting out a roar of terror, he stood up and bolted.
Some adventurers besides Gartz’ companion tried to stop the rampaging Gartz, but Gartz shook them off and jumped out the door.
I can hear shrieks and angry yells from outside but, ummm, this isn’t my fault, right?

Decided that it didn't happen, I turned around and found that the receptionist ojousan was frozen with the card in her hand.

"Not going to copy it?"

"Heh? Ah-, please excuse me. I'll immediately copy it over!"

She transcribed the details from my card into what seemed to be a register of names.

"And it's finished. Umm, what did you do to Gartz-san earlier?"

"Nothing really."

Taking the card back, I gave a curt reply.
It's the truth that I actually didn't do anything, and it was all an act of fate, but it seems that the receptionist isn't really buying it.
Even if he's carried off my cursed tantou in the chaos and is affected by the status effects, it's not as if I've attacked him after all.

"Umm, do you require an explanation on the requests?"

"Yes please."

Even if she hadn't accepted it, perhaps sensing that it wasn't a good idea to poke her nose into it, the oneesan changed the topic to pretend it didn't happen.
I was grateful for that too, so I accepted.

"The things posted on the bulletin board to the left are request papers. Please rip off the requests that you'd like, and bring them to the reception along with your Adventurers Card. Once the request is complete, please present the proof and your Adventurers Card, and we will hand over the reward. There are also some requests with time limits, so please take care. Once the time limit has passed, you will have failed the request, and will need to pay a penalty fee."

Hmm, so far it's all normal.
Only, nothing is written on the request paper except the contents of the request, the reward, and the time limit, huh.
Speaking of which, there doesn't seem to be ranks written on the Adventurer Card either, does there.

"Are acceptable requests divided by rank?"

"They are not; you can fundamentally accept any request. We do warn you if you pick a request that's too impossible, but we will not force you to comply."

In other words you're responsible for yourself, huh.

"Requests are mainly divided into three types; subjugation, collecting, and guarding. Do you requite an explanation of each?"

"Those are fine."

As you'd expect, at least that much can be understood just by the names.

"That concludes the explanation. Will you be immediately accepting a request?"

After giving a nod, I peeled from the bulletin board a request that I had my eye on, and placed it on the counter together with my Adventurers Card.

"Umm, let's see, the medicinal plants collection request. The minimum number is five leaves, and are 30 copper altogether, but even if you collect more it isn't a problem. This is a permanent request by the guild, so there's no time limit."

One leaf is 6 coppers, huh?
It's probably in-between the buying and selling price of the stores.
Eh? Aren't you going to accept a subjugation request, you ask?
It's scary, so don't wanna.

“It doesn’t matter where you collect them, but they grow in large numbers in the eastern forest, so that would be the most reliable place.”

“Got it.”

I collected my Adventurers Card and turned around.
All of the adventurers who were peeking at me averted their eyes together.
What’s with this? Bullying?
It didn’t seem that it’d be a good thing for me to say here like this, so I left the Adventurers Guild.

I bought a sandwich from a stall to eat for lunch, and headed town from the eastern gate.
I returned the temporary ID that I got when I entered town yesterday, and had them return my deposit.
After walking for an hour I reached the forest, and around the time I collected 10 leaves, the sun had set so I returned to town.

Unusually I didn’t meet any trouble, and passed the day without being attacked by monsters, but I only realised that this was something abnormal much later.

Chapter 7 – Job Change?

Scanties are a type of underwear in Japanese that corresponds to low-cut panties, or particularly short panties.
For research purposes, please search google images for 'スキャンティ'.
Please feel free to envision the design of your choice.

It's been three days since I've been tossed into this world.
On the first day I had my hands completely full with just getting to town, and on the second and third days I earned money by doing the Adventurers Guild's collection request.
Even with only two days experience as an adventurer, I've realised one thing already.

I can't live doing only collection requests.

Because the day I registered I did something like go to the church, the day ended with just the medicinal herbs collection quest, but the next day I had time so I accepted two requests.
The reward I got was just barely 1 silver coin, and just spending a night at the inn used that up.
If you include the food expenses then I'm completely in the red.
Because I have the compensation money――――let's go with that――――from the first day I won't be immediately troubled, but my spending exceeding my income is just a matter of time.

There should also be novices besides me who won't touch the subjugation requests, but I wonder how those people live?
While I was wondering this I gave asking the receptionist oneesan a go, and found that those people were those that lived in this town and didn't need to pay inn fees, or people who lived together in a cheap inn room.
In other words, my lifestyle doesn't match my income.
In that case you might tell me to drop the level of my lifestyle, but for a modern person that's too rough even as a joke.
Honestly speaking, to me, even the inn I'm staying right now is at a level that I can't fully accept as 'high'.

And moreover, as a maiden I'm against sleeping together even for a little with people I'm not in a relationship with; for the moment let's leave aside the issue of whether there's a man out there who would actually attack me.

And given this, I have no other choice but to increase my income.
With collection requests, I know that no matter how how hard I try it'll be difficult to increase my income any more than this, so the only choice left is to accept subjugation requests or bodyguard requests.
I'm not really up to either of them, but if I had to pick one then I'd go with the subjugation request.
Since picking a bodyguard request would require direct communication with the client, it's clearly not suited for I who can't work in the hospitalities industry.
Moreover, anyone can see that if I accidentally met eyes with them while we were on the journey, it'd turn into a huge fuss.
To begin with, I doubt that I'd even be hired as a guard with my eyes hidden like this.

Subjugation requests require you to subjugate the designated monsters, and bring back a part special to them.
The monsters that have subjugation requests sent out are ones that cause some sort of harm, or those that pose some sort of risk.
The clients are mostly those that have suffered harm, the Adventurers Guild, the Merchants Guild, or the lord of the town.
A subjugation request for goblins which become annoying once they grow in numbers is a permanent request put out by the Guild.

Since it's "subjugation", you have to kill the target, but honestly speaking that's a heavy burden for me.
"I've never even killed a bug before"… is not what I'm saying, but in all my life I've never knowingly killed an animal before.
I think all modern people are similar in this.
Honestly speaking, suddenly accepting a subjugation request is something that needs courage, and I'm scared that I'll fall into a helpless panic and get killed instead.

But I happened to hear about a beginner's dungeon south of Riemer.
Dungeons are generally labyrinths that take the form of caves, and inside

are countless monsters and traps, and finally sleeping treasure.
Activated dungeons are controlled by a dungeon master, but the beginner's dungeon that I mentioned already had its dungeon master subjugated, so apparently its fallen under the jurisdiction of the Adventurers Guild.
Because it was subjugated when it had just formed, it was a short dungeon with only three floors, and because low level monsters like slimes and cobalts spawned endlessly, it's apparently being utilised as a training ground for those new to subjugation requests.
Additionally, the term 'Beginner's Dungeon' is the popular name amongst adventurers, and nobody remembers the official name.

Of course, even if it's under the jurisdiction of the Adventurers Guild, the things it releases are real monsters, and it's not as though there's absolutely no threat to your life at all.
But the beginner's dungeon with its limited monsters has a higher level of safety than an actual subjugation request, so you could say that it's the ideal spot for training.
Since I couldn't find enough courage to accept a subjugation request, I've decided to try training in the beginner's dungeon for now.
If this is no good, then I'll have to look for another way to increase my income.

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After walking for a little under two hours from the eastern gate was the entrance to the dungeon by the lake shore.
Giving a sidelong glance at the sign that said "Only authorised personnel are permitted entry – Adventurers Guild, Riemer Branch", I timidly step foot into the entrance of the dungeon.
Having said that it's under the jurisdiction of the Adventurers Guild, its not as though the inside has been modified, and it's a cave that goes into the bare rock itself.
While holding the tantou in my right hand, I began carefully searching.
Speaking of which, I've heard that as long as you keep your left hand along the wall, even if you get lost you'll eventually make it to your goal. I might get lost after all, so I'll do that, at least until monsters appear.

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Having walked around inside the cave for perhaps an hour, searching the dungeon while cutting down ferocious monsters that attacked me with a single swing of my dagger… is not what happened.
No, well, despite having walked around the cave for almost an hour, for some reason I haven't been attacked by a monster even once.
On the contrary, I haven't even seen one.
I considered that it might just be how it is, but I immediately refuted that idea.
This is clearly unnatural; like this, it would probably be completely useless as a training grounds for the Adventurers Guild.
At this rate I'd just be walking around for nothing, so I decided to think about it while taking a break.

The truth is that I actually vaguely know the reason why, but I just don't want to acknowledge it.
If I acknowledge it, there'll be some real trouble later.
Having said that though, it's also a fact that running away from reality forever won't get me anywhere either.
I need to gather my courage and face reality.

…It's because of the Evil God Aura isn't it, this situation?

The effect is a lot weaker on people than the mystic eyes so I forgot, but *"the effect on humans is lower"* is in other words, *"on things other than humans, it demonstrates a strong effect"*.
There's no way that an aura that'll send a dragon running frantically won't frighten slimes and cobalts.
Since the first floor loops around if you walk far enough, if they're always running away from me then I can understand why I would never meet them.
Speaking of which, even when I was first thrown into the forest, and when I was searching the forest for the collection requests, I've never been attacked by monsters in the places that I've visited, but thinking about it now that was clearly unnatural.
Because of the Evil God Aura, the monsters probably ran away without me knowing.
Being unattacked by monsters is something good in and of itself, but at the same time it means that I can't complete a subjugation request.

Since subjugation requests are targetted at monsters that attack people to begin with, having the enemy turn tail and run from you is probably beyond expectations.
Being the case, it means even if I go out on a subjugation request the monsters will just run away from me from afar with the exception of monster nests in places like caves with dead ends, but I can't imagine that such a convenient request will come by often.
…I'm stuck.
The reward for collection requests is low, and if I'm unsuited for subjugation and bodyguard requests, then raising my income will be difficult.
Do I really have no choice but to drop the level of my lifestyle…?

『The dungeon core of dungeon "Lakeshore Cave" has been granted divine protection.』

Mn?

『Gained control of dungeon "Lakeshore Cave".』
『Gained title "Dungeon Master".』
『Acquired skill "Dungeon Create".』
『The fundamental structure of the dungeon will be modified based on the dungeon master's attribute.』
『Dungeon name has been changed to "Holy Land of the Evil God".』

Wai-, hang on.
No, seriously, please hang on.

Shocked at the sudden event, the surrounding scenery underwent a complete change before my eyes.
The ceiling that had seemed reachable with your outstretched hand grew several metres taller, and the sides grew far, far wider.
The walls that had been bare rock had changed into walls of black brick, and the torches that had been placed here and there changed into ominous candlesticks and shone with eerie purple light.
Drifting around me was a thick and eerie dark green fog, and I could hear a malice-filled roar that seemed to resound from the depths of hell.

This place that shouldn't have had a single cobalt now had countless wraiths and golems swaggering about.

Mn, it's been splendidly changed from the beginner's dungeon from just now to a place with a last boss-ish atmosphere.
From the fact that the monsters aren't attacking me, together with the voice from just now, I've more or less guessed it already, but I'll check just to make sure.

"Status."

Name: Anri
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 17
Job: Mage
Level: 1
Title: Child of the Evil God, Dungeon Master [New]
Mana: 3031504
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
– Item Box (Lv.4)
– Dungeon Create (Lv.1)
Equipment:
– Tantou of the Wicked Demon
– Black Clothes of the Evil God
– Babydoll of Depravity
– Scanties of the Succubus
– Pumps of Darkness

Mn, unfortunately it seems that I wasn't just hearing things.
My titles and skills have increased.
I ended up becoming a dungeon master.

<Dungeon Master>
The ruler that lords over a dungeon.
Can use the dungeon core to manage the dungeon, and eliminate intruders.

<Dungeon Create>
The elementary skill for a dungeon master.
Used by the ruler to expand or maintain the dungeon.
A dungeon core is required to use the skill.
The level depends on the number of floors the controlled dungeon has.
Lv.1 is for 1～5 floors.

From the 『voice』 earlier, and what I can see from the explanation, there's something called a dungeon core in this dungeon, and those that control the dungeon through that are the dungeon masters.
And the beginner's dungeon had its dungeon master subjugated, but perhaps because the dungeon core was left as is, or perhaps for some other reason it reappeared.
In other words, I don't know for how long exactly, but in a dungeon with no lord, as long as you have the dungeon core you can control the dungeon, and because of my divine enchantment skill the effects spread via the dungeon and the dungeon core figuratively fell into the palm of my hand…
Is this for real?

This is bad, seriously bad.
It seems like the dungeon master of an endlessly growing dungeon would be subjugated, so if this gets found out my life will be targeted.
And now that the place that should have been a beginner's dungeon got turned into *this*, they'll immediately notice the abnormality.
Now that it's come to this――――
"Let's pretend it never happened."

Mn, thinking about it carefully, even if the abnormal change of this dungeon is made public, I can just put on an innocent face and live in town.
After all, I haven't tested to see if other people can see it too, but as long as the skills and titles on my status screen aren't seen by anyone else, there's no way that anyone should know that I'm the dungeon master.

Chapter 8 – Moving

Hello, it's Anri.
This is a bit sudden but… I was driven out of the inn.

Strictly speaking, my five days at the inn were up, and when I asked to extend it I was refused.
I hadn't noticed it myself, but the innkeeper obasan was terribly afraid, so we probably accidentally had eye contact at some point.
And though I did think that this would happen before long, being driven out this early was beyond expectations.
And the fact that I wasn't forcefully driven out, but that they entreatied me "I'm begging you, please leave" pierced my heart, so I'm pretty depressed.
Perhaps I should be looking for a replacement inn, but the shock was just so great that I can't find the motivation for it.
And in a way, it might be perfect timing.
Since I haven't solved the problem of balancing my income and expenses, you could say that this is a good chance for me to think about really doing something about it.
It's just that if I don't think about it like that, I won't be able to go on, though.

While taking a breather in the central plaza café that I ordered a black tea in last time, I thought about my plan for now.
There are two general paths that I'm considering.
The first is that I'll guarantee some other income source, and the second is doing something about the "shelter" issue that takes up most of my expenses.
I considered the former when I signed up to the Adventurers Guild too, but because it was too hard I ended up giving up.
In both personality and skill abilities I'm devastatingly unsuited for the hospitalities industry, and it's not as if I have the know how either so jobs in production are impossible.
There's basically no path for me to take in trying to earn money except for adventuring.

Alchemy using my divine enchantment──buying cheap things and selling them after enchanting them with divine protection──is something I considered as well, but because there's a high chance that the weapons and clothing I enchant turn into cursed items, to begin with I wouldn't be able to sell it, and even if I could sell them, it'd be an extremely eyecatching thing to do and would probably bring me trouble.

As for the latter, finding a place to live is difficult too, and since I only have 5 gold with me I don't have enough to buy a house, and because renting a house and staying at an inn both have the risk of being driven out, I wouldn't be able to settle down.
In the first place, living in an environment with other people means that I'd always have to be careful so that I absolutely wouldn't meet eyes with anyone, so to begin with it was impossible.
Ideally it'd be *"a place with nobody around"*, *"not rented, but owned by me"* and also *"has a fairly decent living environment".*
Since I'm stating my desires, it'd be best if it comes with *"a way to make money"* as well.
"As if such a convenient place…"

could exist, was what I wanted to say, but the truth is that if I don't care about what methods I use, there actually *is* such a place, which is why I'm so troubled.
Do I take principles, or do I take profits…? That balance has probably already tipped in my heart.
You can't deal with an urgent problem without sacrificing something in return.
Mn? A samurai pretends he has eaten well when he has no food, you say?
I'm not a samurai, so there's no problem.
Gathering my thoughts, I headed to a store to stock up on food.

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Three hours later, with a large amount of food stuffed into my item box, I came to the dungeon from the other day.
I've twisted my ideals and chosen the path of profits, in order to live in the dungeon.

"a place with nobody around" …From the town, it takes two hours to get here on foot, and there are no oddballs that have taken up residency here
"not rented, but owned by me" …I *am* the dungeon master after all
"has a fairly decent living environment" …It's not that great now, but I can expand it and remodel it as I please
comes with "a way to make money" as well …There'll probably be plenty of easy targets with money from now on
The demerits are 'obstructions to my peace' and 'the pain to my conscience' but the former can be fixed by strengthening the dungeon, and as for the latter, even in the worst case scenario, I'm going to compromise and make it a rule in my heart not to let anybody die.
Having made up my mind like this, I entered the dungeon.

I could grasp this vague and delicate feeling of "it feels like I can do this for some reason" with my ability as the dungeon master.
For example, since the dungeon is the area ruled by the dungeon master, as long as it's within the dungeon I can move where I'd like, and although this is limited to when I'm inside the dungeon, I can see and hear all the places inside the dungeon.
I used teleportation to move to the room with the dungeon core.

In a small room of about 6 tatami, a blue crystal of about 50 centimetres was floating in the air.
This was probably the dungeon core.
I touched the dungeon core with my hand as I muttered.

"Dungeon Master."

Name: Holy Land of the Evil God
Attribute: Darkness, Death, Pestilence
Floors: 3
Mana: 1532

My own status was the same, but the dungeon status couldn't get any more sinister.
I'll pretend that I didn't see the name and attributes, and look at the other entries.
Having three floors means that it probably took over the beginners

dungeon as is.
A lot of the fundamental structure has been changed, but I guess the separation into floors hasn't changed.
It seems that the mana value is the amount of mana that's been accumulated by the dungeon, and it seems that using this I can expand or maintain the dungeon.
There are two ways to accumulate mana in the dungeon core; either when the dungeon master personally fills it with mana, or when invaders die in the dungeon and their mana is sucked away.
The dungeon core serves as a piggy bank too, and if the dungeon master puts in mana every day, they can utilise mana above their capacity.
For example, an average dungeon master's mana value is 10 to 20 thousand, and since it costs 1 million to add a floor, at that rate they'd eternally be unable to add floors to the dungeon, but if they store it in the dungeon core then regardless of their capacity, if they store 10,000 each day, a simple calculation will tell you that it'll take them 100 days per dungeon floor.
But actually putting all your mana into it would probably be bad, and you'll probably need to use mana for other things as well so it wouldn't go so simply, and you'd need a longer amount of time to add a floor.

Having learned all this information from the dungeon core, I smiled bitterly.
As expected, it seems that a mana value of 3 million is abnormal.
Just having a nights sleep will restore most of my mana, so each day I can add three floors, meaning that in 100 days I can add 300 floors.
No, I mean, even if I add that many floors it's just going to get impossible to manage, so it's not like I'm going to do it though.
Mm~mm, I want to stop saying 'mana value of ___' and give it some kind of unit. Maybe points?
Anyway, I poured 3 million mana points into the dungeon core, and used 2 million from that to add two layers.
It seems that the floor with the dungeon core automatically stays the furthest down, and right now it's become the 5th floor, with a new 3rd and 4th floor above it.
I made the 3rd and 4th floor orthodox and typical labyrinths, but I used the remaining 1 million points to remodel the 5th floor into a base.
I divided it into a few rooms and created a bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom, toilet, storeroom, and an office with the dungeon core in it.
While I was at it I used mana to create a pseudo-sun and established a

day/night cycle.
There was an off feeling about having the light come from directly indoors rather than from outside a window, but I'll probably get used to it before long.
What's left is to use one of the larger rooms to create an indoor vegetable garden… it'll probably be a while before any harvests though.
Because I was remodelling as I liked, the 1 million points were used up in a blink, but for now I've made it look like the bare minimum for a residential section.
At the end, I instructed all inhabitants to intercept intruders, but I made sure to give a strict order not to kill them and only knock them out.
With normal monsters there'd probably be dissatisfaction and a chance that they'd ignore the orders and go with their instincts, but the inhabitants of this dungeon are all non-living monsters with no sense of self, so they'll probably obey my orders absolutely.

Because I used a huge amount of mana, I'm feeling sleepy, but somehow overcoming it with willpower, I headed to the bathroom.
It's the first chance in a while for me to get in a bath, so I can't fall asleep until I'm satisfied with the bath.
I was really thoroughly soaked in the first bath I'd had in days, and while still in the water, I fell asleep.

Chapter 9 – First Purchase

This marks the final chapter that I've promised you guys. So expect no more chapters. I mean, it doesn't mean I won't do them, but don't expect any! Because they won't come! Although I might post some. But they won't come! So you'd better not expect any!
This is a teaser! And I'm doing more teasers which might turn out to be even more amazing to some of you, so yeah! Holdest thy tongue!

A kantoui（貫頭衣） is a Japanese type of clothing that's basically a simple cloth with a hole for putting the head through, worn like a poncho. According to a certain Chinese text, Japanese people were wearing these at the end of the third century.

Former adventurer, Dungeon Master Anri here.

I fell asleep while still in the bath so I thought I would catch a cold, but I turned out as healthy as ever.
If I had to name a problem, it would be that the curse apparently activated while I was asleep, and I ended up soaking in the bath with the tantou and robe equipped.
I can't change, so I'm stuck with being soaking wet like this…

Well, if I walk outside for a while it'll probably dry off, but because I'm soaked down to my underwear it feels gross.
Am I going to be unable to bath for more than 30 minutes?
Pulling myself together, I took out food from my item box and after having a simple breakfast, I teleported to the entrance.

Leaving the dungeon, I headed towards town.
Having made a decision to become a dungeon master, the problem of "shelter" is now gone.
Because of the curse I can't change, and I can only worry about the problem of "clothing" without being able to do anything.
What's left is the problem of food, and although I did buy a large amount yesterday, and I've established an indoor vegetable garden as well, the food stores can only decrease, and it'll be a while before I can harvest.
Even if I could harvest them, I'm not a vegetarian so it'd be tough for me to live only eating vegetables.
Meaning that I'll be forced to make a shopping trip in town once in a while, but… there's one problem with this; I don't know how long I'll be able to come and go here.
With the events with the church and the Adventurers Guild, a group of people probably already have suspicions towards me, and once the transformation of the dungeon is known, it wouldn't be strange even if there were people who linked the timing together.
Thinking about it like that, it would probably be better to assume that one day it'll become difficult for me to come and go here.
Considering that I'll be unable to enter and exit the town, I want somebody I can entrust the shopping to, but unfortunately I have nobody to rely on.
Don't say lonerised! I know I am.
Even if I were to hire someone, there's nobody I can trust and leave everything to, so there's only one choice left that comes to mind.

Showing my Adventurers Card and entering the town, I headed towards the slave dealer.

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I first found out that this world had slavery right after I reached town.
I had an image of slavery being illegal and shady, but it was in normal shop

in a place relatively close to the main street and the memory of being shocked but that is still fresh in my mind.
Based on the information I heard from other peoples' conversations, as well as some guesses of my own, the slaves of this world are apparently separated into four types; people whose statuses had been dropped to slavery as punishment, the crime slaves; people from a defeated country who were taken as war prisoners, the war slaves; people who had fallen to slavery as security for a loan, the debt slaves; and finally people who were born to two slave parents, the birth slaves.
There are various reasons why they separate the origins of the slaves, but they're all unrecognised as humans all the same, and bought and sold for money.

The slaves are forced by a contract to their master to absolute obedience.
In this world where magic exists, 'absolute obedience' doesn't mean just a rule, but being compelled to obey the commands of their master.
Even if you ordered "kill yourself", no matter how much they tried to refuse, their body would move on its own and they would suicide.
Slaves are treated as possessions, so no matter how a master treats them, the master won't be punished.
Because they're fundamentally expensive, I dont think people would kill them on a whim too often, but that's not an absolute.
The most expensive slaves are young females, followed by men with good builds.

As someone born in Japan, I'm opposed to the slavery system, but a person who won't betray me no matter what could be said to be the most suitable.

…*
…*
…*
"Welcome. Will you be purchasing a slave today?"

When I entered the shop a neatly dressed, tidy-looking man asked me that at the very beginning.
It seems that he's the shopkeeper here, but he was so different from the arbitrary image I had of slave traders being fat men that I was at a bit of a loss as to how to react.

When I nodded, he guided me to one of the tables set in the shop.
The shopkeeper sat down right opposite me, and our business talk began.

“Our shop has all sorts of slaves prepared. What kind of slave could it be that you are looking for?”

“In the first half of their teens, and a female… ah, and on the verge of death.”

The moment I stated my request, the shopkeeper froze, and looked my way.
Because I can’t look at him in the eyes, with my eyes still hidden, I replied with silence.
There’s no doubt that it was the third condition that he reacted to, but of course I have proper reasons for saying it.
The first is the price; I’d feel reluctant about ordering around people my elder, and since I’d need courage to eat and sleep together with someone of the opposite sex, I want a girl in the first half of their teens, but in that case the 5 gold I have with me might not be enough.
If it’s somebody who doesn’t have long because of illness or injury, then even if they’re a girl in their early teens, I thought that the price would be lowered greatly.
I wasn’t sure if they even sold someone like that to begin with, but there *are* apparently uses… as human shields against strong monsters, and the experimental materials for mages though.
The second reason is that even if I bought a slave here and left the shopping and my daily life to them, there’s the problem of that slave being afraid of me.
From the point of keeping my secrets, I’d need to have them live in the dungeon with me, but if we’re living together then it’s probably impossible to not ever meet eyes with me.
Even though with the absolute obedience to their master, a slave can’t go against them, in the end they’re only bound in their actions.
If I ordered them “Don’t be afraid of me.” they would just be unable to act afraid, and it wasn’t as if the fear itself would disappear.
I’ve come up with one countermeasure, but for that to work I need them to accept me at least once.
If they’re not somebody grasping at straws on the verge of death, they won’t meet the prerequisites.

“Of course, there aren’t many slaves like that, but we do have some. I must trouble you to come downstairs with me. Would that be all right, miss?”

Nodding in reply, I followed him into the back of the shop.
It seems that if you were looking for a normal slave then the shopkeeper would pick some that satisfied your requirements and bring them out, but for a cases like mine they wouldn’t be able to be brought, so they’d go see them like me.
After descending some narrow stairs, a jail came into view, the illuminating torchlight interrupted by the cell bars.
Inside the cells were a number of females.
All of them were completely naked, but while some were lying on plain futons, others were sitting with their backs against the stone wall.

“According to your requirements miss, it should be those in this area. If any catch your eye, I will give a detailed explanation but…”

I interrupted the shopkeeper who was turned to me and speaking by lining up beside him, and at an angle where he wouldn’t see my face, I removed my hood and looked over the women in the cage.
I could separate the responses into three.
Those who trembled and averted their eyes, those who didn’t react and just unmovingly stared into space, and just one who, though frail, was looking in my direction without budging.
I stepped forwards towards the only one that showed a different response, and stared beyond the bars.

That girl was sitting just by the bars, sitting powerlessly against the wall.
Her long blonde hair was dirty and dull, her ribs could be seen, her limbs were withered away, and she looked like she could take her last breath at any moment.
Even her face that would have surely been pretty if she was healthy had sunken cheeks, and was just a shadow of what it probably had been.
But even on the verge of death, she registered my presence, and had her blue eyes turned to me.

“This girl is?”

“Her name is Tena, and she’s 14 years old. She was born in a village a little distance from Riemel, and is a debt slave, but on the way here she was attacked by a fatal disease and she probably only has a month left to live.”

They’re cruel words to say before the person in question, and Tena trembled when she heard them.
However, at the same time this was proof that she hadn’t yet given up on living.
Despite knowing that her life was about to end soon, without giving up, she was still clinging to the desire to live.

“If it’s me, then I might be able to save her.”

After dropping those words, I could see that her blue eyes that were looking at me were shaken.
She was meeting eyes with me, but she didn’t show any sign of being afraid.
It’s probably that because she spent each day attacked by a fear of death stronger than the fear given by my eyes, her sense of danger was numbed.

“I don’t have any proof, but if you’ll believe and accept me, then take this hand.”

In front of the bars, I held out my hand.
For a while, Tena looked at my face, and the hand I was holding out, but in the end she timidly held out her hand and met mine.

“How much?”

“The cost is 5 silver coins.”

While lightly grasping this thin hand that seemed breakable even with my feeble strength, I asked the shopkeeper behind me for the price, and got that kind of reply.
Having said that she is on the verge of death, I couldn’t tell whether that price was high or low for a human, but with her potential, if she’s healthy she would probably be worth 100 times that.
The shopkeeper probably felt a lot of doubts about my words and actions,

but perhaps because of his awareness as a professional, he didn't ask me about it.

"Got it. Then I'd like you to dress her in any random clothes; I'll pay for the extra."

"No, if it's just simple clothing for slaves, then it's complimentary."

He summoned a tough-looking assistant man who opened the cage and carried Tena out.

"We'll hand her over once we've washed the body and given her clothes. We'll need you to finish the paperwork in the meanwhile, so please come back to the seat from earlier."

I followed the shopkeeper at his prompt, and left behind the underground jail.

…*
Sitting down when I returned to the shopfront, I entered the necessary details into the contract sheet, and paid 5 silver coins.

"We have certainly received it. Finally, there's the registration of the slave, and the paperwork will be done."

When he said that, with good timing came the man with Tena in his arms.
She was wearing a kantoui if you could call it that; it was a simple outfit made of a cloth with a hole for her head.
It wasn't tied up with a belt, so her naked young body could be seen from the sides.
Seemingly having been washed, her blonde hair had also regained a lot of its colour, but even so the aura of death that floated from her entire body crushed out any of her appeal.
Laid on the floor, there was a collar that hadn't been there before around her neck.

"Please touch her collar with your hand."

Following the shopkeeper's words, I stood up from my chair and reached my hand out to the collar on Tena's neck.
The collar made of some unknown stone-looking material hadn't a single seam, and looked like it couldn't be taken off.
After touching it for a while, the collar shone with light.
Is this the same make-up as the Adventurers Card?

『Tena has been enslaved.』

Just like the times I enchanted something, or the time I became a dungeon master, I heard a voice from somewhere.

"With this, she's become your slave, and has absolute obedience to you. Because she can't walk, would you like us to call you a carriage?"

"I don't need it; I'll carry her."

Saying that, I ignored the shaken shopkeeper and assistant, as well as Tena's voice, and grabbing her arms, I placed her on my back.
She twisted her body to try and get down, but in the end, perhaps finally giving up, she calmed down.
I'm not sure what kind of expression the shopkeeper was giving me when I left the store.

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She was light.
They did say she was 14 so she was certainly younger than me, but perhaps because of malnutrition, she was more petite than her age, and was one or two heads smaller than I was.
To add to that, she was thin enough that her ribs were showing, and she had so little weight that even the powerless me could easily carry her. Somehow that lightness made me sad.
Having said that though, no matter how light she might be, I still have to carry her all the way to the dungeon by foot, so it'll probably be tough for both of us.
After leaving the shop, I entered an alleyway and walked a little, and after finding a place where nobody was around, I let her down to the ground.

Tena who was sitting on the ground looked up imploringly at me as I stood next to her, and in reply I took a step back from her and removed my hood.

“You swore to believe in me.”

“…Yes.”

For the first time, words came out of her mouth.
Hearing her answer, I thrust a finger at her forehead.

“If those words of yours are true, then accept this.”

Saying that, I used my skill consciously for the first time.

“Divine Enchantment.”

『Divine protection has been granted to Tena.』
『Divine protection has been granted to Slave Clothing.』

Together with those words, Tena was engulfed in gathering darkness.
When the darkness cleared, Tena’s appearance had completely changed.

The blonde hair that was dull even after being cleaned was now radiantly sparkling, and her sunken cheeks and fleshless limbs were now full, and the softness characteristic to a girl had returned.
There was a black pattern where I poked her, like a sideways letter “S”, and her blue eyes had turned to deep crimson.
Her clothing resembled the kantoui as well, but it had morphed into something resembling a blackened version of an ancient miko outfit, decorated with ornaments.
More than anything, her atmosphere of near death had disappeared, and the brilliance of a bishoujo returned to her.

Mn, seems that it went well.
Though it’s that of an evil god, it’s still a god’s “divine protection”, and a game-broken skill that changes beginner’s equipment into things that you’d find in the final dungeon.
I expected that even a fatal illness could be cured in an instant with it.

That even her clothing would change was a little beyond expectations, but if it's cursed… sorry.

"Eh-…. Ah-…"

Dumbfounded at the transformation to herself and her outfit, Tena stared wordlessly at her hands and clothing.
While she did so, she realised that despite feeling sharp pains just by breathing before, there was now no sign of her illness at all, and tears began to spill from her now red eyes.
To Tena who thanked me again and again as she clung to the hand I had thrust out earlier, I swallowed down the guilt of distorting her life and future for my own convenience, so that it wouldn't show on my face.

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Tena whose tears had stopped after continually crying for a while had paled upon thinking back at what she had just done.
Seeing Tena peeking at my face, I was secretly relieved that even if she had become healthy again, she didn't show signs of being afraid of me.
I wonder if she's gained resistance to my magic eyes and aura because of her divine protction.

"Stand.""

"Y-, Yes-!"

I didn't intend on saying it so strongly, but Tena bolted up, and stood at attention waiting formy next words.
It seems that there's no terror from the skill, but I got the impression that she was nervous to the extreme.

"I want you to live at my home and do the housework and shopping."

"…Eh?"

? I wonder why did she react to me like she was doubting me?

“Dissatisfied?”

“T-, That would be absurd! Only, umm… is just that much fine?”

Ahh, I see.
Certainly what I just asked her to do could normally be dealt with by simply taking applications for servants so there’s no reason to go out of my way to buy a slave.
Slaves exist to be forced to do things that servants can’t, or won’t do.
Only, I don’t have anything else I particularly want her to do for me, so it can’t be helped.
If the master was a man then he would probably add serving him at night to that, but I’m a woman so that has nothing to do with me.

“Just that is fine. But, I live quite far from town, so shopping is quite a task.”

“Understood.”

Tena tilted her head in wonder about where I lived, but she probably hasn’t even imagined that I live in a dungeon, huh.
Explaining would be difficult, so I’ll just have her see it for herself.

After buying shoes and underwear for her, I had Tena register at the Adventurers Guild before leaving town.

Chapter 10 – Hikikomori Lifestyle, Begin

It's been four days since the slave girl Tena has begun living with me.
At first she was just shocked about everything, but even she seems to have finally gotten used to it.
Rather than 'gotten used to', it might just be that she's abandoned thinking about the outrageous and abnormal though.

It seems that she helped her mother with the housework in the village, so she can do most chores, and the things I can't do like the cooking or cleaning I've completely left to her.
No, I mean, I should say this just in case, but it's not as though I don't have ability in cooking and cleaning.
It's just that when I pick up a knife to cook the tantou will knock it out of my hand, and when I try to put on an apron the robe will flick it away.
Even when I thought to just clean up the area around me and picked up a broom it was no good; it seems that brooms are treated as weapons.
Inidentally, when it comes to laundry, I can't change my clothing, so she just does her own.
Fortunately, perhaps I should say, it seems that because of the activation of the divine enchantment, although it's only at first, the clothing seems to undergo a status restoration after a certain amount of time, so filth and tear doesn't remain.

Tena's a slave, but right now my only order as her master is "Don't do anything that'll put me at a disadvantage".
She seems to hold an absolute devotion to I who cured her illness and saved her life, so even if I don't go out of my way to order her, she'll work eagerly.

While giving a sidelong look and watching her work, I chanted "Status.".

Name: Anri
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 17

Job: Mage
Level: 1
Title: Child of the Evil God, Dungeon Master
Mana: 3031504
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
– Item Box (Lv.4)
– Dungeon Create (Lv.2)
Equipment:
– Tantou of the Wicked Demon
– Black Clothes of the Evil God
– Babydoll of Depravity
– Scanties of the Succubus
– Pumps of Darkness
Kin:
– Tena

The new “kin column” was added with Tena’s name listed there.
I checked with Tena, but it seems that only I can see this status screen, and Tena can’t see my status.
Also, Tena tried chanting “Status.” but she apparently couldn’t see anything.
When I focused on Tena’s name on my status menu, her status was newly displayed.
Tena herself can’t display the menu, and whether it’s because she became my slave, or because of the divine enchantment is unknown, but it seems that her status is treated as part of mine, and I could see her status.

Name: Tena
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 14
Job: Mage
Level: 3
Title: Slave, Disciple of the Evil God

Mana: 60532
Skills:
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.4)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.4)
Equipment:
– Miko Outfit of the Evil God
Subordination: Anri

I decided to accept her “Slave” title as something that couldn’t be helped, and “Disciple of the Evil God” was probably because of the divine enchantment, huh.
Her mana value is as high as 60 thousand points, but considering that the average dungeon master has 10~20 thousand, it’s probably a value that’s exceeded the human realm.
It’s unclear now what her mana value was before the divine protection, but it seems that she doesn’t have any knowledge of magic herself, so I can guess that this value came about because of the divine enchantment. *‘In fact, the person herself didn’t realise but she actually had a natural talent for magic’*… the chance that it’s something like that isn’t zero, but, well, there’s almost no mistake that it’s because of the divine enchantment. Even her skills; they’re the same system of skills as mine after all.
The “Miko Outfit of the Evil God” is the kantoui modified by the divine enchantment, but the fact that she has nothing else in her equipment doesn’t meant that she wasn’t wearing underwear or shoes, but rather that apparently normal clothing with no defensive properties aren’t counted as equipment. It’s not as if I’ve gone and ordered her to go commando.
The time when I bought shoes and underwear for Tena she was feeling extremely obliged and was hesitant about it, but I forced her to wear them for the sake of my mental stability. I’ve heard that normally there are no masters who would give such things to their slaves, but wearing a miko outfit in the nude is just such a sexual deviant-esque get-up that I wouldn’t be able to calm down with her around.
Additionally, it seems that the Miko Outfit of the Evil God isn’t particularly cursed, and Tena can change clothing normally… It’s discrimination.

“Tena.”

“Yes, Anri-sama.”

When I called out to Tena who was placing a teacup before me, Tena immediately replied to me. By the way, at first she called me “Goshujinsama [tl: esteemed master]” but I couldn’t calm down so I got her to call me by my name instead. I said that she didn’t need to attach the -sama, but this was apparently where she drew the line, and because she stubbornly resisted, I gave up.

Tena was about to stand behind me in waiting so I told her to make her own share of tea and sit down opposite me. Tena was bewildered about sitting down together and tried to decline, but I had something to talk to her about so I somehow got her to agree. Even though she should have been raised in a village, why is she so skilled in serving others is hopeless mystery.

“Do you want to see your family?”

To the question I suddenly dropped, cutting to the point, perhaps it was unexpected because Tena stiffened up.
I heard that Tena who was a debt slave was taken away by slave merchants as security for a loan. Thinking that she might want to return to the village since she was forcefully separated from her family, I decided to ask her what she thought about it.
As for me, I’d be troubled in various was if she wasn’t here so I’d like to avoid her leaving, but I don’t really mind her returning to her village for a little while, so if she wants it then I intend to let her. We’ll probably be acquainted for a long while after this, so I thought that I should be considerate so that she didn’t built up dissatisfaction.

“It would be a lie if I said that I didn’t.”

“Then,”

“But honestly, I don’t know what kind of face I should make if I meet them. I think my family feels the same way.”

Well, that’s just about right.
The family that sold the girl for money, and the girl who was sold for money; even if it was something they couldn’t help, it’s obvious that it’s complicated.

“Got it. Then if you feel like meeting them after you sort out your feelings, then say so. If it’s a few days, then I don’t mind.”

“T-, Thank you very much!”

Her eyes were teary, but Tena’s smile was really charming.

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Now then, since she’s living here, it’s for Tena’s sake as well that strengthening the dungeon is my top priority. Over four days I’ve been slightly modifying the dungeon, and each day I’ve added a floor, so at present it has 9 floors. I have no intention of increasing it endlessly, but because I want a dungeon as impregnable as possible to guarantee our safety, I plan on expanding it to 30 floors.
I don’t want to think about fighting myself, but I’ve left 1 million mana points remaining for emergencies, and each day I spend 2 million points on strengthening the dungeon. 1 million points are used for adding a floor, so that leaves 1 million left for remodelling and reinforcing.

On the first day I spent points on adding rooms to the residential area, and adding furniture. I needed a room for Tena to use as well. It was a residential area with nothing but the bare minimum bed and table, but now, it’s finally got the appearance of a home. At the very least, just by having a bath the lifestyle circumstances are higher than the inns in town though.

On the second day, I established a teleportation circle on each floor.
As the dungeon master I can free move through the dungeon, but Tena can’t do that. Since I’m having her go to town to buy things and the like, I need a way for her to easily reach the entrance. Luckily I was able to make it so that it was only usable by people whose mana had been registered beforehand, so invaders won’t be able to use it.
Additionally, on the floors besides the residential area, I created two teleportation circles; one that goes one-way towards the entrance, and one towards the residential area for non-living things only. The former is for when defeated invaders want to go home, and the latter is especially made to send down loot from fainted intruders.

On the third day, I worked on adding to the monsters that appeared.
Originally it was only wraiths and black steel golems roaming about, but I added skeleton lords and chaos elementals as well. In order, they're; spirits of the dead that are not only impervious to physical attacks, but use powerful magic; a 3 metre tall steel lump of a doll; a skeleton that can easily swing a greatsword; and a lump of miasma that can absorb every attribute except holy.
Of course, I've made sure to forbid the new monsters from killing people as well. Both of them are non-living things, so they'll obey my orders absolutely.

On the fourth day, I put traps on each floor.
The point was to avoid death, so of course I didn't put any dangerous traps that would kill people instantly. They were mainly things like bear traps, pitfalls, paralysis gas, sleeping gas, and one-man teleportation circles.
Incidentally, the last one is the nastiest. It's a small sized magic circle so it's function is limited to the one floor, but it'll suddenly send only one person in a party somewhere else. If I surround them with monsters once they're alone, it probably won't even be a fight.

And with today's new floor, the dungeon has grown to 10 floors. Since 10 is a nice number, I've decided to place a room when you descend from the 9th floor with a boss guarding the entrance to the residential area. Monsters that don't appear endlessly and need to be brought forth or summoned individually are boss monsters.
Spending the entire 1 million points on bringing forth a single monster, I ended up stationing the No Life King. He looks like a skeleton-type monster with a luxurious robe, and a crown on his head. Giving off a thick aura of death from his entire body, that majesty of his is truly fitting to be called the king of the undead.
Since I had already gone to the trouble, I used the few remaining points to add a throne worthy of him to the boss room.
…With this, if I turn the entrance to the residential area into a hidden door, even if there are mighty warriors who make it this far, they might do me the favour of mistaking him to be the lord of this dungeon.

Now then, with this, it finally looks like a real dungeon. Of course I still intend on strengthening it more, but even at the moment, we can deal with invaders up to a certain extent.

Chapter 11 – A Dungeon With Few Customers

On the 8th day since I began administrating the dungeon, the first adventurers finally visited.

While I was enjoying my after-meal tea in the residential area that was now on the 12th floor due to the additional floors, I heard the sound of the intruder alarm. Also, the No Life King is still stationed on the 10th floor. I stationed him there as a boss to protect the residential zone, but once I considered that I'll be adding more layers later, it seemed that the 10th floor was a nice clean place for a midboss, so I decided it might be good for him to continue controlling the floor. Incidentally, even though there's a midboss, there's no end boss. I mean, I have no intention of fighting after all. I'm having the No Life King as a boss room that you need to pass through no matter what if you want to take the stairs from the 10th to the 11th floor, so I'm having him stay there.
Also, it would be boring to be able to simply challenge a boss, so I decided to prepare a puzzle that you had to complete by correctly arranging the stone slates left around the same floor, like the puzzles you often see in RPGs. If you put the sun, moon and star type slates into the pedestal at the very end of the 10th floor, the wall is set to open up and let you into the boss room. Just to make sure, I added the message "Thee who wouldst come in challenge before the throne of the undying one, arrange correctly the skies." on the pedestal. I get the feeling that it's basically already solved with this, but it's for aesthetics' sake.

..*
Now then, enough about the 10th floor. I need to have a look at the intruders this time. Still holding the black tea that Tena steeped for me, I headed to the office.
There was nothing but a chair, small table and pedestal in the office, with the dungeon core set above the pedestal. After I sat down on the chair, I placed my hand to the dungeon core and used my mind to bring up the information on the intruders. A window opened and showed the inside of

the dungeon. In the image of the first floor were 2 adventurer-looking men, and when I looked to them, their statuses appeared.

Name: Lufree
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 25
Job: Swordsman
Level: 14
Title: None

Name: Benet
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 16
Job: Swordsman
Level: 4
Title: None

I didn't know all this time because nobody except Tena and I had been in the dungeon before, but it seems that I can use the dungeon core to see the status of intruders to the dungeon. However, unlike our statuses, I could't see the skills or equipment.
But still, for a duo, there seems to be quite a difference in age and levels. Unlike Lufree who was wearing metal armour, Benet was equipped with light weight leather gear. Both of them had longswords in their hands, but the sword that Lufree was using was giving off a more remarkable aura as a sword than the one Benet was holding. I could see a difference not only in age, but in their equipment too. I wonder if it's a case of a veteran supporting a beginner while he gains experience.
Thinking about it carefully, if the news of the dungeon's transformationg hasn't spread yet, then these two came here with the intent of challenging the "Beginners Dungeon", and it looks like that assumption was correct. The fact was that they had stopped in confusion at the entrance, over the change to the dungeon. But in the end, it seemed that they decided to see what the inside was like, and the two of them carefully made their way into the dungeon.

..*
Before the pair who had cautiously made their way from the entrance room, appeared a wraith and black steel golem, one after another. The two of them stiffened up in shock, but Lufree, the more experienced of the two, regained his senses more quickly and shouted something towards Benet while raising his sword into a guard.
However, Benet was frozen with fear, and couldn't react to that shout.
The wraith fired clumps of shadow, and though Lufree immediately jumped to the side and avoided a direct hit, Benet didn't react and was thrown against the wall by the impact. While worrying about Benet who was sliding down the wall, collapsed, Lufree brought his sword into a guard again without any carelessness.
At that point, the black steel golem closed in and swang down its fist. Lufree dodged to the right whilst diagonally diverting the blow with his sword, before swinging the sword in an arc towards the left side of the golem. However, the result of that was the cruel scene of his good sword being broken in an instant. Lufree who had swung his sword was dumbfounded by the broken half of the sword that flew through the air.
At that point, the black steel golem swang the fist that had been blocked horizontally, and with the bewildered Lufree unable to parry, he took a direct blow to the chest and was sent flying roughly 5 metres into a wall, before falling to the ground. Lufree tried to somehow get up, but at that point, the wraith once again fired clumps of shadow, and Lufree who was collapsed on the floor was unable to immediately move, and after being struck in the side by the clump, he was once again sent flying. This time he had apparently completely lost consciousness, and didn't get up.

The black steel golem neared the unconscious two and collected their items and gold, and after dragging them to the room with the dungeon exit, threw them inside.
Also, because the room with the exit is like the residential area in that monsters are forbidden from entering, the black golem couldn't go inside. The teleportation circles from each floor also head to this room.

After tossing the unconscious intruders away, the black golem picked up the collected items from earlier, and began walking towards the 1st floor's item-use teleport circle. The items that he collected will probably be sent directly to the residential area that I'm now in.

For now, I can probably count this times' invaders as repelled.
In fact, even though I did give orders not to kill anyone, it was still scary to watch. They should have held back enough, but even so, as long as they were attacking, the possibility of somebody dying due to being hit in a bad spot wasn't zero, after all. As long as the invaders have a certain degree of power, I reasoned that they would probably be able to react to avoid taking fatal injuries, which is why the possibility of somebody dying by accident was supposed to be quite low, but because there was somebody who was obviously a beginner this time, it couldn't help that I was worried.

Having only just remembered about my now cold tea, I finished the rest before leaving the office and heading to the room next door with the item-use teleport circle.
While walking down the hallway, I considered the adventurer duo from earlier. They were probably lying in the 1st floor room with the exit right now, but they realised that the dungeon has changed. Once they regain consciousness and return to town, they'll probably report the transformation of the dungeon to the Adventurers Guild.
When that happened, I can think of two reactions the Adventurers Guild will take.
The first would be to send in high level adventurers to survey it, and the other would be to make an announcement and publicly solicit people to conquer it. Only, because it would be difficult to conquer the dungeon without knowing the level of difficultly, I expect that they'll send an investigation team at least once. Unlike this time, it'll probably be fairly high leveled adventurers being sent in. I was prepared that this might happen at some point, but now that it's here, it feels like I'll be crushed by the anxiety.

When I entered the room with the teleport circle, the swords and items had just been sent in. Repelling adventurers, and then stealing their items…
Without even having to think deeply about it, it's the same as what a robber does. But for challengers to a dungeon, getting only their weapons, items and gold stolen and being returned to the entrance with their lives even after collapsing is exceptional service. Had this been any other dungeon, they woud have definitely died, so although I'm not going to ask them to be thankful, I hope that they'll think that it was at least better than what could've been.
Also, that I stole their weapons but not their equipment… is not because of

compassion, but rather because I can't stand the stink. In this world where people don't typically take baths, the smell that you get from the armour worn over many days by men who don't wash themselves is, something that makes my hair stand on end just imagining it.

The spoils of war this time were 2 longswords (though one was broken), 3 silver coins, 25 copper coins, 4 medicinal grasses, and 2 adventurer car――――wai-, adventurer cards!?
Oh crap, as you'd expect, taking these away is pretty bad, and to begin with, without adventurer cards or money, the two of them won't be able to return to town, so my expectations have gotten messed up in various ways.
When I teleported to the entrance room in a panic, I confirmed that the two of them were still unconscious, and quickly returned their adventurer cards. While feeling relieved that my follow-up made it in time somehow or other, I teleported back to my original room. I have to make sure to order the monsters in the dungeon not to take the adventurer cards, later.

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Two days after the first intruders, the dungeon alarm rang out once again. It seems that adventurers dispatched by the Adventurers Guild to survey the dungeon are now intruding.
The duo that I beat up had entered in the early afternoon 2 days ago, and had returned to town and reported to the Adventurers Guild. After deciding on the course of action, the whole of the next day they gathered people and prepared, and so today they sent out the survey team…
Mn, the timing matches up.
I quickly headed to the office, and just like last time, sitting on the chair I held my hand to the dungeon core.
In the image shown of the 1st floor were 4 men.

Name: Vaif
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 32
Job: Swordsman
Level: 25
Title: None

Name: Banard
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 29
Job: Swordsman
Level: 22
Title: None

Name: Theodore
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 29
Job: Mage
Level: 20
Title: None

Name: Esel
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 26
Job: Scout
Level: 19
Title: None

It seems that the party this time is quite well balanced. Moreover, even the lowest level Esel is higher level than Lufree from the other day.
It's probably the highest level party amongst the people that the Riemel Adventurers Guild could immediately mobilise. As expected, the veteran scout who took the vanguard was checking for traps and enemies, and they were carefully and safely exploring.
Even when they encountered a black steel golem along the way, they were a party with clearly divided roles, for example the swordsmen holding up a strong defence, while the mage used earth magic to destroy the ground beneath the golem and stopped its movements.

After they smoothly explored the 1st floor, they found the stairs to the 2nd floor and headed downstairs.
On the 2nd floor, at first their exploration had been going well too, but for

some reason it seemed as though their enthusiasm suddenly dampened halfway in. Standing on the spot, they energetically argued with each other, but I feel impatience from their expression.
I didn't know what they were talking about, so I couldn't tell what was going on except for the fact that something inconvenient for them had happened. It's extremely convenient that I can watch what happens in the dungeon like a movie, but being unable to hear sounds is inconvenient, so if I can do something about it, I'd sure like to improve this.

After that, they continued exploring, but Esel who had his concentration messed up stepped on a paralysis gas trap, and except for Theodore who was in the back, the other three were paralysed. Because of two black steel golems who seemed to use that gap to attack, the party was wiped out all too quickly.

Chapter 12 – The Robbing Evil God

After driving out the survey team-looking people, starting from two days later, the number of intruders suddenly jumped up. On a normal day, 3~5 parties will come to raid us. And because I got fed up with hearing the alarm each time, I changed the settings so that it would only ring once they reached the 4th floor.
At the moment, 80% of the intruders are defeated on the 1st floor, and most of the remainders fall on the 2nd. The only party that made it to the 3rd floor was the survey team from the other day who had come to challenge it again, and nobody reached the 4th floor.

『GYAHHHHHHHH!』

『G-, God dammit… To… in a place, like this…』

Also, regarding observing through the dungeon core, it needs quite a bit of mana, but I managed to reform it so that I could hear sounds too.
The result was that I found out the reason that the survey team 's pace suddenly got worse on the 2nd floor. Apparently there's miasma floating in this dungeon. Certainly now that you mention it, I do get the vague feeling that that word was mixed in amongst the attributes for the dungeon, but I want to believe that in the end it's just the characteristic of the dungeon and not something that's my fault. 'Miasma' or whatever kind of sounds stinky, so I'm absolutely denying it.

『What a sinister dungeon. The dungeon master has gotta be a pretty dangerous guy.』

『Yeah, we gotta brace ourselves.』

By the way, based on what I heard while eavesdropping on them, there are apparently lots of different types of miasma, but the miasma in this dungeon doesn't do physical harm like a poison, but apparently has an effect on your mental state. Speaking simply, it amplifies fear, and is a

troublesome thing because although this dungeon is one that you need to progress through really carefully even at best of times, the miasma increases your mentral strain right away. In the end it's just a mental effect and can't do anything to you physically, so apparently you'll be alright as long as you keep yourself together, but the act of bracing yourself in itself brings about mental strain, so it's a nasty one.

『Kuh-, the miasma is too thick! It'll get dangerous if we go any further!』

『We're only on the 2nd floor yanno!? If it's like this on such a high level, just how terrible are the lower levels!?』

Perhaps as an effect of being linked to the exit, the miasma is thin enough that there's almost no effect, but in comparison to this, the 2nd floor and below has thicker miasma by the level.
…Is it really because I'm on the lowest level?
No, no, the Evil God Aura is supposed to have a weak effect on humans, so it's probably something else. That's why I'm not in the wrong.

..*
Proportional to the amount of invading adventurers, the amount of collected items have increased too. Honestly speaking, it's taking quite a bit of time to sort the items that were collected. Even at a glance there seem to be some things I didn't really understand mixed in there, so I had to throw them into the item box and check the name… and after I did all this, it ended up taking a surprising amount of time.
And even though I did the work with all my might, sadly, despite the amount of time it took to organise everything, there were a lot of things that I didn't need. For things like mass-produced swords, no matter how many dozens of them I had there was no use for them, so I think I'll have them brought to town and sold for money, but if people who should have lost their items in the dungeon saw them while shopping, it would definitely be suspicious so I can't. In that case, I could just stop collecting them, but now that I've already started doing this, it seems that it'll give birth to some weird speculations in the public if I stop halfway, so I'm hesitant to do so.
I should have told them just to collect the gold. I'm sick of seeing swords already.

『Aah… I'm done, my consciousness… A-, All I want… just my sword… this sword that took me two years of saving up for, can't…』

And so, I've decided to try putting them in treasure chests.
Using the Dungeon Create skill, I created and installed a treasure chest creation box. The treasure chest creation box is a wonderful thing that places the things inside it into treasure boxes randomly around the dungeon. The treasure chest creation box is something that's used to lure in prey, since normal dungeons steal mana by killing intruders. Placing things like strong weapons or expensive gems into the treasure boxes, they lure in prey using greed.
In my case, I throw in nothing but unnecessary things like weapons, so it's almost used like garbage collection though.
But still, having said that they're unneeded, weapons or whatever can be sold for fairly high prices, so it's not as though it doesn't attract customers.
Moreover, once the news spreads that you can get back the things you lost in the dungeon from these treasure chests, it'll be possible to sell things under the pretense that we found them in the chest. Well, if we do it too much, as you'd expect things would get suspicious, so we can only sell a few at a time though.
Also, I wasn't really sure about having only these unneeded consolation prizes, so for roughly every ten, I'd mix in one with enchantment. They might be cursed, but looking at just my tantou, the stats should be good.

『T-, This sword is!?』

『We'd better report this to the church, or else, huh?』

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"I am back, Anri-sama."

"Welcome back."

Tena had returned from selling things in the city.
Also, since the number of adventurers dropping by had increased, I created a backdoor for Tena to come and go through. I might be a little prejudiced, but about half of all adventurers are rough-looking men. If it were in town

then it might be another matter, but I can easily imagine that if they met a girl like Tena in a place with few people, she'd definitely get mixed up with them in a bad way.
Of course, since I can't say that she'll be absolutely fine in town, I instructed her to buy a robe for herself to use in town, and not show her face too much.

"I have put the ingredients I bought in the food storeroom."

"Thanks. And so, how about the thing I asked for?"

"Yes, please have a look at this."

I asked Tena in an indirect manner like that, to go have a look and see how the Adventurers Guild was treating this dungeon, while she was out shopping. When I asked her about the result, she presented me one sheet of parchment.
This was written on it:

Request: Suppress the dungeon master of the new dungeon south of Riemel, the "Wicked Cave of the Robber"
Reward: 30 gold coins
Requirements: Present the dungeon core
Time Limit: None

"Wicked Cave of the Robber?"

Did they discover some other new dungeon?

"It seems that the Adventurers Guild has named this dungeon as such."

Wai-, they're talking about *this* dungeon? Thinking about it, neither the adventurers nor the guild have any way of knowing the official name of this dungeon, so if you had to ask if it was obvious that they'd give it its own name, then yeah, it's obvious I guess.
But still, by "robber"… Well, I mean, I certainly do take the items and gold of the intruders, so it's not as though you can't call me a "robber", but even though I thought that we'd have a more positive image than other dungeons, the impression they have of us is cruel.

“Unlike other requests, this one does not need to be accepted, so as long as you meet the requirements, it seems that you can receive the reward. This paper has been distributed to all parties.”

Rather than a request, I wonder if it wouldn’t be more accurate to say that it’s basically a bounty already. That I’d have a bounty on my head is not something I could even have imagined when I first came to this world… is perhaps not something I can say, since the moment that I saw the skill explanations.
A reward of 30 gold coins is quite a large amoutn, so I can assent to the sudden surge of intruders. If the conquering of the dungeon doesn’t progress, then the guild will probably raise the reward, so the intruders will probably keep increasing from now on.
If this was a normal dungeon, then the intruders would die once they fell anyway, but as long as you don’t have a series of terrible coincidences, you won’t lose your life in this dungeon. In other words, unlike other dungeons, as long as you don’t give up you can try again, so even if the number of intruders increases, there won’t be much decrease.

I need to strengthen the dungeon to stop them from breaking through to the lowest level, at any cost. Having decided this, I decided to return to the office.

Chapter 13 – Cornered

Sacred Goddess implies 'a saintly woman-type, goddess'

The alarm that represented intruders rang out.
This sound that I hadn't heard for the long while since I changed the conditions for the alarm to people invading the 4th floor, sent my right tension up. When I sat on the chair on my office and looked at the intruders on screen as usual, I found a party of 4 being shown. Two of them were female.
When I checked the intruder party's status I found a shocking entry.

Name: Arc
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 25
Job: Swordsman
Level: 38
Title: Hero of the Holy Sword

Name: Zio
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 28
Job: Swordsman
Level: 33
Title: None

Name: Frey
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 24
Job: Mage
Level: 33
Title: None

Name: Widdi
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 19
Job: Cleric
Level: 31
Title: None

Hero…?
I was shocked at the title held by the ikemen swordsman with the short blonde hair who was walking as the vanguard.
No, I mean, since it's a fantasy world like this, having a hero might not be all that strange, but now that he's here in front of my eyes, I can't help but be shocked, as you'd expect. Moreover, the fact that it's shown as a title must mean that he's formally recognised as a hero by "something". I don't know if it's a god, or a country, but even though there's been close to 100 intruders so far, nobody else has had a title.
But not only the hero who doesn't fail to live up to his name, the other party members also have levels that are clearly a cut above the rest.

Could this possibly be a desperate pinch that I'm in…?

I've already increased the dungeon to 27 floors, but I'm worried about whether that will be enough to stop them in the end. Let's say that they do manage to reach here, what would I do? What would*they* do? When I see the sharp looking shining sword that the hero is holding, an unpleasant sweat runs down my back. While praying that he wouldn't reach me, I continued to monitor their exploration.
『The effect of the barrier is about to run out, so I'll recast the barrier, okay?』

『Yeah. Counting on you, Widdi.』

Widdi who was dressed in a nun's outfit gave her proposal, and they all stood still in the large room. After Widdi chanted her spell, for an instant, all of them were wrapped in a white light. The light settled after a moment, but if you looked carefully, you could see that their whole bodies seemed to be faintly shining.

『With this, we'll be protected from that troublesome miasma for a while longer, hey?』

『Now that we've come as far as the 4th floor, it's gotten very thick after all, so if we didn't have Widdi's barrier, our progress would not be very good at all, would it?』

『Huhu, I'm glad to be of use. Because we have the protection of Arc-sama's Holy Sword, it might have been meaningless though.』

『Nah, it helps. Even if we have the enchantment of my Holy Sword, I don't think it would feel too good being enveloped in this evil miasma.』

Well, *sorry* for being evil.
But still, monks had a way to defend against the miasma? This is some important information. The enchantment on Arc's Holy Sword is on my mind as well.
『But still, this dungeon was only just made, right? Just how many floors down does it go?』

『Usually it would take a number of years to grow, huh?』

It seems that because they stood still to reapply to barrier, they've decided to take the chance to rest in that room. While paying attention to the surroundings, they sat down in the room and began chatting.

『Well about that, it seems that when the dungeon master of this dungeon was originally subjugated, this place was only 3 floors deep. The guild believes that the current dungeon master took over that dungeon and used it as the basis for this one.』

『Even so, considering that this floor right now is the 4th one, there's no mistaking that this place grew in a short time, huh?』

『Yeah, you have a point, Frey.』

『But well, I really doubt that it's in the double digits after all. I don't know when this dungeon master took over this dungeon, but even at the earliest estimate, it wouldn't even be a month after all.』

Well, no, it's 27 floors.
It's more convenient for me that they're optimistic, so I'm not going to tell them though.

『The dungeon master… huh?』

『What's wrong, Frey?』

『Well, I was just wondering what kind of guy the dungeon master is, you see. The impressions of them is just too randomand… while you're thinking about how they release this terrible miasma, at the same time all their traps are non-lethal, so…』

Seeing the glamourous mage oneesan fall into thought, Arc asked her the question, and she voiced her doubts. Certainly if you consider it from an outsider's point of view, perhaps it can't be helped that they see it as random. It's not like I'm releasing this miasma because I want to after all, and from my perspective, I did try to make everything consistent, though.

『Speaking of which, I've heard that there still hasn't been one fatality in this "Evil Cave of the Robber" yet, hey? Even when you get done in by the monsters and faint, they only take your weapons and items and throw you by the entrance apparently.』

『Ahh, I see. So that's why it's "robber" isn't it.』

『Even so, we can't let our guards down. The monsters that appear here are all strong foes that will easily wipe us out if we lose focus after all, and even if the traps are non-lethal, they're dangerous and can throw us into a crisis in an instant. Also, if by some chance I had the Holy Sword stolen, I wouldn't be able to face our Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama.』

『I don't think that beings of evil would be able to touch the Holy Sword, but yes, that is true isn't it.』

Sacred Goddess Sophia, huh? Is that the name of the god worshipped in this world? Speaking of which, the time when I went to the church in Riemel, I get the feeling that there was a statue of a goddess enshrined further inside the church hall. I didn't have time to pay attention to it at the time so I don't remember the details though.
In my old world I didn't believe in god, but as long as that evil god exists, it wouldn't be strange for god to exist either… or rather, I'd hate it for there only to be that evil god, so I hope they *do* exist. Well, since the monk really can use their power, I think the power of gods exists at the very least.
Going by Arc's title and the conversation just now, could it be that he received the Holy Sword from that goddess? From the name 'Holy Sword' it probably has holy power, and in a dungeon with lots of undead, you could say that it's something you could call its natural enemy.
Considering that I was rejected by the church's barrier, I'll probably go through a harsh time if I meet with that sword too. Of course, even if it this wasn't the case, I'd still pass on being cut down though.
『Well, I don't know what kind of guy they are, but there's no doubt that their personality is totally messed up, hey?』

『Ahaha, definitely. They seem to be a money-grubber, so they might even be dressed up like an upstart rich guy, you know. I'm sure they definitely look like a fat, ugly lump of meat.』

『Huhu, you're right.』

Youuu-. I-, I want to hit them…
I'm sure they meant it as some meaningless chatter, but no matter what, isn't saying those things about a maiden just too cruel? Boiling mad, I sent the monsters current on the 4th floor towards them, and at the same time, I poured in my mana and increased the spawn rate of the monsters on the 5th floor and below.
Without knowing about the angry me on the other side of the screen, the hero party wrapped up their break and began exploring again.

I was wondering how they were avoiding traps without a scout, but apparently the hero senses them all beforehand with nothing but intuition. Or it might be the enchantment on the Holy Sword or something. From what I've heard of their conversation, that possibility seems high, but it's

quite an all-purpose sword, huh? Or rather, I get the feeling that it's already gone beyond the category of "weapons".

As expected of a high level party, perhaps I should say, even the attacks by the monsters whose numbers I increased were easily driven back. The skeleton lords were cut down by Arc's Holy Sword, the black steel golems's metal fists were blocked by Zio's shield too. The wraiths were blown away by the flames and blizzard that Frey shot out, and even the chaos elementals were purified by the light magic that Widdi fired.
Although the hero party wasn't completely uninjured, they progressed smoothly through the dungeon without any major injuries, and it took them roughly 2~3 hours to conquer each floor. Right now they've reached as far as the 7th floor, but since it's already basically night time, it seemed that they were tired as you'd expect because I could see that the energy in their movements had dulled. In particular, the female members who were the rear guard with low stamina were tottering enough that it seemed like they would collapse.
No, if you look carefully, only the hero seemed to still be fine. I can't tell if it's the enchantment on the Holy Sword, or if it's just how he is though.

『How 'bout we rest a little, Arc?』

Noticing that the girls were tired, in one of the wider rooms, Zio suggested this to Arc.

『Hmm, yeah. It's been already been half a day since we entered this dungeon. I had no idea that it'd be this deep, so I didn't prepare camping gear, but let's take turns sleeping and guarding.』

At Arc's words, Frey and Widdi sat down, deeply relieved.

『I-, I'm saved.』

『…Hah… Hii…』

When it came to Widdi, it seems that she couldn't even speak.
Even if they get through a floor every two hours, it means that they'll take more than two dayss to get to the 27th floor where I am. Without having

expected and prepared camping equipment beforehand, conquering this dungeon will probably be tough. Considering that, it doesn't look like they'll be conquering the dungeon on this run. I was a little relieved.

Also, this is completely off topic, but I decided to place a toilet in the room of each floor. They were the first people to explore the dungeon for very long, so I hadn't noticed this problem.
Thanks to that, I caught sight of the horrible scene of the blonde ikemen hero doing his business… I'll say it just in case, but I didn't peep through the gaps in my fingers or anything like that.
It was even graver when it came to the women; seeing the bishoujo nun tell the party with a bright red face, close to tears, that she had to use the bathroom really made me sympathise with her, so I made the decision to create the toilets. Their chatter during their break pissed me off, but even so, the feelings of sympathy as another woman won out.
A dungeon this kind doesn't exist anywhere else, you know?

For now, they probably won't be moving until morning, so I decided to sleep as well.

Chapter 14 – Natural Enemy

An ishibitsu is a Japanese funerary urn made of stone. They've been around for at least a millenium.
*Picture of an ishibitsu with its lid:*http://www.fufufufu.com/fufufufu_image/p_image/3/20338_3.jpg

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When the day broke, I put on the robe that I had draped around my body, and headed to the bathroom. For now, since the forced equipping doesn't happen as long as I'm touching it, when I go to bed, I drape the robe around me in place of a blanket.
After washing my face and getting rid of my drowsiness, I headed to the dining area that was part of the kitchen, and found that Tena was already in there preparing breakfast.

"Morning."

"Ah-, good morning, Anri-sama."

When I called out to her, she replied back energetically.
When I sat at the dining table, my breakfast was carried over to me in an instant. Toasted bread and fried egg with salad and soup; a healthy breakfast. If I had to be greedy, then I'd have liked a Japanese-style breakfast, but since there's no rice nor miso, even demanding it wouldn't help.
Tena set down the same meal on the other side of the table, and then sat down as well. Because she kept firmly refusing, it took quite a bit of effort to get her to eat with me, but now its basically how we spend every breakfast. I'm not a noble, so it's tough on me to have somebody stand behind me while I eat breakfast by myself.

"Itadakimasu."

"Itadakimasu."

Nomnom, yummy. It's a simple meal, but Tena's cooking is generally delicious. I've decided not to ask Tena yet what her life in the village was like, but judging from her personality, she probably earnestly helped her parents.

"Speaking of which,"

"Yes? What is it?"

"Does 'Sacred Goddess Sophia' ring any bells?"

"Sacred Goddess-sama? Well, of course, but…"

When I gave that question a try while eating, I found out that apparently, the deity worshipped in the standard religion for this world, the Sacred Light Faith, was the Sacred Goddess in question. She was apparently the deity that created this world, fights against the Evil God as the Goddess of Light, and guides the people through divine protection and divine revelations. Those who receive particularly strong divine protection become heroes, and becomes those that defeat the Demon King, the being born from the Evil God to bring calamity to humanity.

"U-, Um… of course I swear loyalty, to you, Anri-sama! Sacred Goddess-sa-, I mean, the Sacred Goddess means nothing to me!"

"I don't really mind if you just keep calling her Sacred Goddess-sama."

Perhaps because she misunderstood my silence while I was thinking, but Tena followed up on her words in a fluster. Although it was the cost of saving her life, I *did* give something like the divine protection of an evil god to Tena, so I had decided that I needed to tell her that the power came from an evil god, and did so. I left out the part about coming from another world, though.
Only, unfortunately I'm just a human who was given too much power by an evil god, so it's not like I'm particularly opposed to Sacred Goddess-sama or anything, and as long as it doesn't harm me, I'd rather her try her best to beat the crap out of that evil god, really.
"Do you know anything about the Hero?"

“Hero-sa-… I mean, the Hero? I’ve heard that the Hero is a special person who’s received divine protection, and fights with the Demon King to defeat him. Also, if I remember correctly, when Obaachan’s Okaasan was a child, there was a great celebration across the nation because the Hero had defeated the Demon King.”

Eh? The Demon King has already been subjugated?
I don’t know about the average lifespan in this world, but I think that Tena’s great-grandmother being a child was fifty years ago at the very least. Going by his age, the Hero that’s invading this dungeon should be a different person. In that case, why was he given divine protection? Could it be that there’s another Demon King?

“Are there lots of Demon Kings?”

“No, at the very least, I have only heard of one. Only, the priest that came to the village to teach us said that even if the Demon King is defeated, he eventually revives.”

I see, the Demon King defeated 50 years ago has revived, and to defeat that, the [current] Hero Arc was chosen to face him?

“Do you know where the Demon King is?”

“I don’t. People say that in the Demon Race Territory, there’s a Demon King Castle, and he’s in there.”

“Demon Race Territory?”

“Ah-, yes. The western part of this continent is controlled by the demon race. The eastern side are divided into a number of human countries, but they say that all of the Demon Race Territory is controlled by the Demon King.”

After that, once I asked in more detail, I found that Riemel apparently belonged to the Kingdom of Fortera, and was right in the middle of the continent. Being in the middle of the continent has a nice ring to it, but if the east and west are divided up between the human race and demon race, then

being in the middle makes it the front lines. I wonder if on the way to the Demon King, the Hero party heard about this dungeon and dropped by here.
Or more like, I wish they would avoid detours like this and just go fight the Demon King already. Hurry up and go.

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After finishing breakfast, I asked for just some red tea from Tena who had begun washing the dishes, and holding my tea cup, I headed to the office. When I checked the screen, I found that the Hero Party had already packed up their simple camp, and begun exploring again. The floor they're on right now is the 7th floor, so if they progress smoothly, I expect that they'll make it to the 10th floor room that the No Life King is protecting in the evening. Honestly, as a fighting amateur, I have no idea who's stronger, but if my boss loses, I'll have a lot I'll need to think about.
Since they thought that this dungeon would have less floors, they came in here unprepared and I don't think they'll make it to where I am, but next time they'll probably come to conquer this place, completely prepared. It won't matter if they can't win against the No Life King, but if it seems that they can beat him, then the chance that they'll reach me eventually is high. I'll need to come up with various measures before they arrive here the next time. Uneffected by my nervous surveillance of them, they steadily made their way through the dungeon.

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The Hero party who had arrived at the 10th floor following my expectations were, *contrary* to expectations, stuck before the 10th floor boss room. What they were tilting their heads in thought about was the puzzle pedestal that I had installed there for aesthetics' sake.
『"Thee who wouldst come in challenge before the throne of the undying one, arrange correctly the stars." huh? Just what the heck could it mean?』

『There are many undead in this dungeon, so I believe that the "Undying One" refers to the boss of this dungeon.』

Widdi replied to the puzzled looking Zio.
Right right, having you think that makes me really happy. And having you go home satisfied after defeating the No Life King would make me even happier.

『I see. Then in other words, if we want to fight the dungeon master, then we have to “arrange correctly the skies”, huh? I wonder what “arrange correctly the skies” means.』

『They probably mean the celestial bodies, huh? I think that’s what these marks on the pedestal represent.』

Ah-, speaking of which, I had the symbols for the sun, moon, and stars, but I didn’t think about whether or not that would translate properly in this world.
Well, they did guess that it referred to the celestial bodies, so maybe there’s no problem.

『How are we supposed to arrange these marks? …They don’t bloody move.』

『Seems that putting mana into it doesn’t work either, huh.』

Eh? No, no, I know that you guys only have one of them, but you’ve still got one of the stone slabs, you know.
Could it be that they forgot? Or could it be that they didn’t see the marks on the slates properly?

『Arc-sama, has the guidance of the Holy Sword not given any clues?』

『Sorry, nothing really…』

『N-, No! I apologise for asking too much!』

So even that cheat-sword that even saw through traps can’t deal with this stupid puzzle, huh? I’m feeling this odd mix of relief and pity…

『Even the Holy Sword from Sacred Goddess-sama can't do a thing? Seriously? It's a pretty hard question, hey? As someone whose specialty is using my body, this kind of thing is a bit much for me.』

『Don't say things like that, and think together with everyone!』

Huh…? Things seriously don't look good. I put that thing there as a bonus question for aesthetics' sake, but once they butted heads with it, they got seriously stuck. Collecting the slates from around the 10th floor is annoying, but I thought solving the riddle itself would've only taken 2 seconds, but…

Hey, don't try and slash the pedestal!
It's not an ishibitsu either, so stop trying to look for a lid to take off!
Cut it out, meatheads!

『It's not good. I haven't the tiniest idea how to get the dungeon master to come out. I thought this place would be a shallow dungeon, so we didn't prepare enough. It's frustrating, but let's withdraw for now.』

『T-, To withdraw right before the dungeon master…-!』

Eh-? There's no way you'll come all the way here only to go home without fighting the boss, right?
It'll trouble me too in various ways if I don't find out if you guys or the No Life King are stronger.
Hey-, wait! Don't seriously go home!
At least put back the slab you took, you thieves!

Chapter 15 – Last Boss Battle

Another few days have passed since the shiver-inducing hero party invasion.

Their actions which betrayed my expectations in an odd way, and the anti-climax coupled with the tension gave me an intense sense of wasted energy.
To damage the dungeon master without even fighting… The Hero is fearsome.
Those muscleheads can just stay as hero(lol)es.

But there's one thing that I realised.
In my old world, solving puzzles in dungeons was a matter of course, but in this world, that isn't the case. I unexpectedly drove off the hero party, but thinking about it, the dungeon's level of difficulty rising means that the level of my safety rises, so it's something I should welcome.
And so, I've decided to try remodelling the 11th to 20th floors by adding puzzles and gimmicks.
While recalling the tricks in an RPG I played long ago and using it as reference, I gave adding in various things a try. Quizzes, moving floors, rotating floors, rail carts, switches that you need to press in order, places where you need to fall into the hole on purpose or you won't progress, invisible floors, 2 containers that you have to balance the water levels for, corridors that will infinitely send you back to the start unless you follow a certain path…
Mn, I might have gone a bit over the top. Well, it *is* something I'm betting my life on, so there's probably no need to hold back. At the very least, that Hero Party probably won't reach the bottom floor for their entire lives.
Ah-, of course I've replaced the stolen stone slabs too.
Just as I finished remodelling, feeling satisfied, the sound of the alarm resounded in my ears.
Another person has gotten to the 4th floor… Wai-, it couldn't be that the Hero Party is already back, could it?
Thinking that, I looked at the screen, when I found that a beautiful girl with long silver hair flowing behind her was reflected on the screen. The girl who

wore a red outfit that gave the impression of being a mix of a dress and a set of armour wasn't using a sword, and instead ripping apart black iron golems with her bare hands.

Name: Leonora Romariel
Race: Demon Race
Sex: Female
Age: 16
Job: Magic Boxer
Level: 24
Title: Demon King Successor

"Demon King…?"

First the Hero, now the Demon King!? Is this dungeon cursed or something? Wai-, looking carefully, it wasn't "Demon King" but "Demon King Successor". Since it's a successor, could she be his daughter or something?

It's my first time seeing somebody from the demon race, but ignoring the fact that she's an incredible bishoujo, there's no difference with humans appearance-wise. But that power is on a different level. So far there have been other intruders of her level, but however you look at it, she seems even stronger than the Hero Party from the other day.
It seems that for a level, each race has their own strength, and it seems that even on the same level, their strength can differ based on their race. To begin with, a person who can make it to the 4th floor by themselves is totally estranged from the human level 20s.
Terrifyingly, she's erasing the wraiths with her bare hands even though physical attacks shouldn't work on them… Wai-, that's impossible.
Ah, could it be that she's attacking with mana clad around her hands? In that case, I can assent to her being able to touch a spirit. Either way, it's not the act of a human though.

『Hmph, is this it?』

Miss Leonora muttered to herself as she dusted her hands against her dress armour. Seeing that majestic and dignified attitude of hers, if it wasn't for

the fact that I saw her ‘Demon King’s Successor’ title, I might have mistaken her for a battle maiden.

『Going from just this, it seems that this dungeon master that calls themselves the Evil God isn’t a big deal, huh. Before long I’ll reach them and beat them down, and make them regret picking a fight with our demon race.』

Pardon?
It seems that I’m getting some incredible hatred for something I have no idea about. Call myself the Evil God? When did I do something like that? She’s the first demon I’ve ever met, so there’s no way I have any memory of picking a fight with them.
Unaffected by my confusion, she found the stairs that led to the 5th floor and continued down.

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The energy she had in advancing was incredible, and she made way downwards at the incredible speed of 1 floor an hour. All the monsters she met on the way were destroyed with just one blow as well, and she didn’t slow down at all.
I hadn’t even imagined that somebody would hit the 10th floor today.

『Hmhmph, did you think a child’s game like this could stop me?』

Unlike a certain Hero(lol), she cleared the 10th floor pedestal puzzle. Hmm, what’s with this? Even though she broke through my puzzle, I want to thank her.
Let’s not mention that it made her agonise for close to an hour.
Upon putting the 3 stone slabs into the pedestal, the wall in front of her split into 2 halves, and opened the way to the audience hall.

『So it is finally time to meet you.』

Miss Leonora stepped into the audience room without hesitation. At the end of the luxurious red carpet lay an elevated throne, upon which say the King of the Undead.

『Welcome, my guest. You are the first one to have reached here.』

『I see. So you're the No Life King mentioned on the pedestal? It seems that you have what it takes to be arrogant, huh.』

To Miss Leonora who was standing right in front of the throne and gazing at him, the No Life King spoke to her magnanimously. This was the first time that Miss Leonora looked nervous.

『Indeed, the one before you is the one who governs many retainers, the King of the Undead. Even in the face of a Demon King, I have no intention of kneeling.』

『It seems that you know what I am. I originally planned on just beating you down, but I've changed my mind. You can just quit being a dungeon master, and serve I who will one day inherit the throne.』

『I said that I would not kneel. Do not push your luck, lass.』

Despite speaking quietly, the tension between the two reached its climax.

『Then I'll make you submit by force!』

『Come. Adding the daughter of a demon king to my retainers would also be amusing!』

The air of tension that had continually built up was ripped apart when the two fired their magic, and a fierce battle began.

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The battle was fierce to the extreme.
When the No Life King shot darkness bullets, Miss Leonora dodged them, and when Miss Leonora let out flames to occupy him, the No Life King used his summoned zombies and skeletons as a shield. High level undead like dullahans and spectres were also summoned and surrounded Miss Leonora, but with mana wrapped around her hands, dense enough that it was visible, she mowed them down without hesitation.

It looked like Miss Leonora had the upper hand, but as the battle dragged on, that situation changed. The No Life King and his retainers weren't living so they didn't get tired, but even if Leonora was a demon, she was still alive, meaning that she had a limit to her stamina and a long fight was something she ought to avoid.
When there was a gap in her concentration because she was out of breath, one of the dullahan's arms that had been cut off grabbed her ankle. Because of the unexpected hand, Miss Leonora lost her balance and fell diagonally.
The No Life King who excelled at coordinating with his retainers did not overlook this opening, and fired the largest darkness bullet thus far at Miss Leonora.
Because she was on the ground, Miss Leonora couldn't avoid it, and being hit dead on she was sent flying for almost 10 metres before hitting the ground.

『Gu… Uu…』

『It seems that this is as far as you go.』

Perhaps to confirm his victory, the No Life King leisurely walked towards Miss Leonora, who was lying face down in agony.

『Gotcha!』

However, perhaps her laying down was an act, because the moment the No Life King entered her range, Miss Leonora raised her body and created a flame at her hand.

『Hmph, cease your futile… What!?』

Although he was in her range, he probably could have dealt with any number of spells created in desperation. However, Miss Leonora exploded the flame magic that fired from her hand on purpose. The out-of-control flame burnt even her own right arm.
She jumped towards the No Life King who was frozen from the shock, and with her fist still wrapped in flame, she hit him.

『Take this!』

『I-, Impossi… ble…』

Unable to react to the unexpected attack, the No Life King suffered a direct hit to his chest. The high-pitched sound of his bones breaking rang out, and on top of that, the flames that clad Miss Leonora's arms lit up the robe he was wearing.
The No Life King fell backwards, but Miss Leonora who had staked everything on that one punch collapsed forward as well. Laying on the ground, she somehow managed to succeed in putting on the fire on her arm.

『Hur-… -!』

It seemed that pain shot through her because she stifled a scream as she got up. Even speaking conservatively, with wounds all over and a heavily burnt right arm, you'd be right in saying that she was battered, but even so, she was dignified and beautiful.
Miss Leonora walked towards the No Life King burning on the ground, and looked down on him. The undead around her had also crumbled because of their lord's defeat.

『To think that you burned yourself to defeat me. You're a mad girl.』

『As if I did this because I wanted to. I planned on making you submit without destroying you, but I didn't have that leisure. You can feel proud for having driven me this far, O King of the Undead.』

『Haughty to the end, you are… Well… that's fine… …n… ri… sa… …apo… gies…』

The No Life King eventually crumbled away, and only his crown fell to the ground, but that too eventually became dust.

Miss Leonora quietly overlooked it.

The next moment, the sound of applause rang out through the throne room.

Chapter 16 – Filing for Reparations

Hearing the sound of applause ring throughout the throne room, Miss Leonora snapped around, turning her gaze towards the source――――towards the throne. On the throne that the No Life King had been sitting on earlier was an eerie patchwork doll.

Well, it's a doll made by *me* though, since I had the time.
I tried making it with Tena as the model, but for some reason I've always been bad at sewing, so it didn't come out the way I wanted. I tried getting Tena to have a little look to see what she thought of it, but I seriously made her cry. Was it that big of a shock that a doll like*that* was based on her, or was it simply because she was afraid of it? I still don't know.
I thought about throwing it away… or rather, I *did* throw it away, and countless times too, but it'd return before I knew it. Mn, seems like it's cursed. It's because it took me an hour to make it, so I accidentally enchanted it.
I used teleport to place it on the throne, but to be honest there isn't much meaning to the doll. I apparently earned the girl's resentment sometime somewhere, so I wanted to try talking to her, but it was scary to meet her directly, so I decided to talk to her through the dungeon core using its voice reception system. But in that case she probably wouldn't know where to face when talking, so I left something random as both a target for speaking, and as my representative.
Once I talk to her, my existence will be revealed, but well, even in the worst case scenario, from what I can tell from the battle, if I prepare a number of No Life King level monsters, I should be able to manage somehow.

『What the hell are you?』

『I'm the dungeon master of this dungeon. The doll is just something to represent me, so there's no point in attacking it. If you want it, I'll give it to you after our talk is done.』

『You think anyone would want such an ugly doll?』

Well, that's right I guess. I'd be extremely happy if somebody took this cursed doll away though. Even if I give it away, there's a high chance that it'll come back though.

『But still, the dungeon master, you say? The No Life King from just now wasn't the lord of this place?』

『That was the 10th floor mid-boss.』

『I see. So the lord that the undead king obeys is *you*, huh? That bastard. Even though he was spouting great lines about not kneeling to even the demon king, to think that he was a dog in the end.』
A dog, huh. Besides leaving the defence of the 10th floor to him――――it might have been a 'her' though――――I more or less left him alone, so even now I'm not sure if we had something like a master-servant relationship.

『Well, that doesn't matter anymore. More importantly… in other words, the arrogant bastard that I'm after is *you*, then.』
Miss Leonora glared at the doll. Even though she was all beaten up from her deathmatch with the No Life King, that dreadful gaze of hers projected on the screen made me shiver… Not. She probably intended on glaring at me through the doll, but the camera for the dungeon core isn't in the doll but looking at her from an angle instead, so it didn't really feel like I was being glared at.

『I want to know what you're angry about.』

『Hmph, asking the obvious! I've come here to give the death penalty to the fool who calls themselves the Evil God!』

『Evil God…?』

『? Why is *that* what you're getting confused about? It's rumoured amongst the people in town that the Evil God lives in this dungeon, you know!』
The heck?

『You're the first person I've spoken to as a dungeon master. I have no memory of calling myself something like the Evil God.』

『What…?』

Even if I did have the chance to give my name, I have absolutely zero intention of calling myself the Evil God. But still, I'm kind of worried about the rumour in Riemel. Why is it being spread that I'm the Evil God? But if there wasn't something to start it off, I don't think such a rumour would appear though.

『You didn't give your name?』

『Nope.』

『I-, I see…』

When I cleanly denied it, Miss Leonora started to have a cold sweat. Becoming fidgety and restless, her gaze began wandering here and there.

『In other words… it was a stubborn misunderstanding?』

When I pointed that out, she reacted with a start, and her unrest intensified. Almost like a small child frightened by their parent's scolding.

『Umm… I… you could say that there's not no chance that that's what happened, or rather…』

『The No Life King that I spent 1,000,000 mana points on.』

『Gu-… That's…』

I didn't tell a lie. I can create three each day, so it's not really a big deal though.

『Reparations.』

I don't really mind, but her reactions are interesting, so I'll try pressuring her a little. Miss Leonora groaned with a sour expression at my words.

『I-, It can't be helped… I'll make it up to you, but, what should I do?』

『Work as the 10th floor mid-boss in his stead.』

『Wha-!? Are you telling me to submit to you!?』

Ah, crap. Did I get a little carried away? Just now her face turned red and showed her indignation.

『A temporary hire. It's fine even if we aren't master and servant.』

『But…』

It seems that Miss Leonora is extremely picky about master and servant relationships. I said that earlier as half a joke and want to take back my words, but if I say 'Just kidding.' at this point, she'd get angry, huh.

『…Got it.』

Mn?

『The No Life King's job. I'll do it in his place.』

Geh-, if you really did that I'd be troubled, you know?

『However! I have no intention of working under somebody whose face I've never seen! I'll only agree after meeting you directly and making a judgement! This is something I'll absolutely not budge on!』

In other words, she wants to have an interview with me? A ploy for a sneak attack…? Doesn't seem so. She seems bad at that sort of cunning. Well, once she meets me she'll probably get let down and lose her intention of obeying me. I'm level 1 after all.

『Got it. In that case──』

I'll head down now, or so I wanted to say, but she cut me off and declared with a determined expression.

『Alright, in that case I'll immediately head down to the lowest floor. Wait there for a little!』

H-, hey… Unaffected by me trying to stop her in a fluster, Miss Leonora made way into the path behind the throne. It seems that she's the type of person who becomes really hard to talk to once she's decided on something. No matter how strong she might be, even by the quickest estimates it'll probably take her 2 days to get down to the 31st floor. On top of that, the 11th to 20th floors are puzzle-solving floors that you can't brute force your way through, so if she gets stuck on one, it'll take forever. Do I have to keep waiting for her all that time?
Having said that though, going by how she looks, she doesn't seem like she'll listen to a thing I say at this point. It can't be helped. I'll have her continue until she feels satisfied, and once she gives up I'll give her an invitation.

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Miss Leonora had managed the splendid accomplishment of reaching as far as the 10th floor in a day, but as expected, from the 11th floor onwards, she fell into a slump of 1 floor per day.

Day 1, the 11th floor quiz floor.
A floor where you'd be given 10 questions with 3 choices each, and progressed by getting them correct. If you made a mistake, you'd be forcefully sent to the beginning of the floor and forced to redo it all.

『Aahh, even though I finally got as far as 8 questions!?』

『Unfortunate. You're returning to the start.』

『YOU———!!!』

Day 2, the 12th floor moving ground floor.
When you stepped on a panel with an arrow, you'd automatically be moved that way, and flying was forbidden. Unless you carefully planned out where you'd get on, you wouldn't be able to progress like you wanted. On a game screen where you could look down from above, it was a puzzle that you'd

immediately be able to figure out with just a little thinking, but it might be quite difficult once it's all spread out in front of you.

『Arghhhh, even though I could see the stairs right in front of me…-!』

『Slow and steady wins the race.』

Day 3, the 13th floor rotating floor.
It's a gimmick where the floor rotates everywhere. All of the rooms were circular and the exits were all equally spaced apart, so once you got spun around, you wouldn't know which way to go. And while you were there, if you span too much…

『…I, I veel zick.』

『As a fellow warrior[samurai], I'll shut my eyes and ears to this.』

Ah-, when was it that I said that I wasn't a samurai again? As you'd expect it was really too pitiful, so I teleported in a cup of water for her.

Day 4———

『Isn't it about time to give up?』

『D-, Don't joke with me. I-, I can still go on…』

So she said, but however you looked at it, she had lost quite a bit of spirit compared to before. Even looking on as a bystander, you could tell that her spirit was about to break.

By the way, because Miss Leonora assumed that it would be a shallow dungeon, she came in almost completely empty handed, and of course she didn't have a single ration with her. I found that I couldn't just watch her challenge the quizzes while her stomach growled, so I sent in bread and soup. On the first day, Miss Leonora was stubborn and wouldn't eat the food, but once the second day came, perhaps because she couldn't bear the hunger, she reluctantly ate.

『T-, To begin with, what's with this!? This mountain of tricks!』

『Anti-musclehead measures.』

『Who are you calling a musclehead! *You*, once I get to the lowest floor you're going to get a good punch!』
『I wonder if I should stop sending food.』

『Wha-!? S-, Starvation tactics are for cowards!』

I don't want to hear that from somebody who didn't bring any provisions. To begin with, there's no other dungeon that provides reception as good as 3 meals a day, so I'd like her to be a little thankful.

『By the way, there's something I'd like to ask, but, how just many floors does this dungeon have?』

Ah-, has she finally realised? Honestly, I think she should have asked this to begin with though. Knowing how many floors there are would provide a hint on how to conquer the dungeon so I can't really make it public, but if it's just her then I guess it's fine. From our conversations so far, I can tell that she isn't the sort to spread this around after all.

『31 floors.』

『Thir…-!?』

Miss Leonora paled, speechless. Despite having advanced through the dungeon while enduring hardships, she still hadn't even reached the halfway point, so I guess it's natural. Having said that, even if the 21st to 30th floor exist, they still aren't finished yet, so the hardest part of the dungeon are the middle floors that she's on right now, but I don't think I'll tell her.

『Giving up?』

『Gu-… Certainly at this rate, I can't help but agree that it'll be difficult to reach the bottom floor, but… if I don't make it to the lowest floor, I won't be able to see you, right?』

『When I spoke to you on the 10th floor, I had planned to head to where you were.』

『What!? Then, my three days of toil were…』

『It's what you reap for deciding not to listen.』

Being poked where it hurt, Miss Leonora fell into silence.

『I get it. It's frustrating, but I'll give up on getting there.』

Seeing her say that with a reluctant expression, I patted my chest in relief. It looked like conquering the 11th floor and down had amassed quite alot of resentment, so if she made it to the bottom floor by her own strength I'd probably get beat up, so I was secretly trembling with fear. She probably isn't shameless enough that she'd beat me even after giving up and then being invited here.
From the very beginning, I didn't intend on having her act as the midboss, but having talked to her for these three days, I know that she's a pleasant person, and I'd be happy if we could build a friendly relationship.

『Got it. I'll prepare a teleportation circle for you so get on it.』

At first I had planned on inviting her into the residential area, but just in case by some chance negotiations got violent, I decided to meet her somewhere else. Well, judging by her personality, I don't think that'll happen though.
The 30th floor boss room is just the room right now with no boss in it yet, so it's just right.
By the way, I've already deployed the 20th floor boss. I summoned a living armour made of orihalcon and tried enchanting it with divine protection while I was at it, but it turned into something brutal.
I was thinking of placing on the 30th floor a dragon that's so common to fantasy worlds, but since I was doing it anyway, I might as well make it the

strongest one, I thought, so I'm saving up mana in the dungeon core right now.
Eh? Wasn't I limiting the monsters to non-living ones so that I wouldn't kill anyone, you ask? Well, heroic warriors who could make it this far will probably be fine.
…Mn? I thought that non-living monsters would be safe since they wouldn't disobey me without an ego, but when he was defeated by Miss Leonora, the No Life King spoke, didn't he? …I wonder why.

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I moved to the 30th floor and then sat down properly on the throne. Neither my personality nor clothing have any trace of dignity, so I have to try my best to look even a little more proper.
Speaking of which, I've established thrones like in the 10th floor boss room, and in the 20th and 30th as well, but thinking about it carefully, neither of the bosses are the right size to sit on a chair made for humans… They ended up being useless. Well, they're serving me like *this* now, so maybe they were useful after all.
While I was thinking about things, the large doors opened with a groan. The teleport circle that Miss Leonora used brought her to the room before this one, so she's properly arrived. When I turned to look at the entrance, I could see a girl with silver hair in a red armoured dress.
I waited for her to enter the room, but she showed no signs of moving at all. Could it be that she can't enter unless she's given permission? Or so I was wondering, but she eventually slowly made way into the room.
From my point of view, she was pale enough that I was worried for her, and I could see sweat was running from her face. She walked slowly and after a few minutes arrived at a place 10 metres away from me, when she stopped still. It'll be hard to talk like this, so I'd have liked her to have come closer, but well, it's not a distance that we can't hear each other, so I guess this is fine.
"Nice to meet "Please excuse my actions!" …you?"

She suddenly dogeza'd at me. Speaking of which, I get the feeling that the explanation for the mystic eyes said something about being strong enough to have a demon king dogeza. A terror strong enough to make the daughter of the demon king dogeza as well… perhaps?

“Um, “I deeply apologise for my many acts of rudeness! If it’s something I can do, I will do anything! So, please… please have mercy on my countrymen!” ”

Why did it turn into a scene where I looked like I was going to attack the Demon Race Territory? I haven’t the tiniest intention of doing that, you know.

“No, you really need to “I beg of you, please punish me alone.” …listen to me.”

I got irritated at the conversation going nowhere, and unconsciously pulled out my tantou and threw it. The cursed tantou pierced right in front of her eyes, and Miss Leonora let out a voiceless scream.

“Raise your head, and stand.”

“H-, However…”

“Just do it.”

I spoke a little overbearingly and forced her to stand. Miss Leonora snapped up and stood still at attention.

“I’m not angry.”

“Eh?”

“I have no intention of punishing you either.”

“T-, Truly!?”

Miss Leonora who seemed truly relieved even had tears form at her eyes. I’m not mad at what’s happened up until now, but rather, it’s the back-and-forth we had just then that annoyed me, you know.

“And also, about the 10th floor boss…”

“R-, Right! Of course I shall carry out my duties with all my heart!”

“You don’t need to do it.”

“Pardon?”

The other day I said it half-jokingly, but if she actually did that, I’d be troubled. If the daughter of the demon king did something like work as a mid-boss, I’d be liable to make enemies of both the human race and the demon race. As for the 10th floor boss, I can just create a No Life King again. Or rather, after Miss Leonora continued down to the 11th floor, I’d already created a new one and deployed him already. Mysteriously he knew my name from the start, but I wonder why.

“In exchange, there’s a favour I’d like to ask.”

“W-, Whatever you would like!”

“I want you to be my friend.”

“F-, Friend…?”

It was from beyond the screen, but the three days that I spent talking to her was quite enjoyable. It’s a shame that she’s frightened because of my skill, but even so, I’d like to think that there’s room to get along enough that she won’t run away even so.
In the worst case scenario, since I already know that we can talk to each other normally once separated across the screen, both considering my feelings, as well as her position as the daughter of the demon king, if possible I’d like to get along with her.

“U-, Understood! Please allow me to humbly become your friend.”

“We’re friends, so you don’t need the keigo.”

“Unders… Got it.”

My first friend in this world, GET.
I didn't threaten her into it.
…I didn't, right?

TL Note:
"so I'll try pressuring her a little."
The "pressuring" is actually "repeatedly attacking with questions etc. to press her for an answer".

Chapter 17 – Girls' Talk

I recently found out that 'jashin(evil god)' is translated by Google Translator (CN>EN) as 'Cthulu'.
Remember that 'Sacred Goddess' comes with the implication of 'Holy Woman-esque Deity'.
The kukuku here is probably stifled laughter, and not 'My name is Leysis Vi Felicity Sumeragi.'-type kukuku.

"Speaking of which, are you the daughter of the Demon King, Leonora?"

"Mn? Yeah, that's right. The current Demon King is my father."

I invited Leonora, who had signed the friendship contract, down to the residential area and had tea with her… after having her take a bath. She cleaned up that dirt and blood stained appearance of hers and we moved to the living room and drank the black tea that Tena brewed.
She was stiff at first, but perhaps because she gradually got used to it, we progressed to being able to call each other by the name. Only, she won't meet my eyes. It seems that the Evil God Aura has an immediate effect on beasts and monsters whose instinct is strong, but to demons and humans whose reasoning is strong, the effect is equally weak. On the other hand, the effect of the mystic eyes apparently works just fine, and when our gazes meet, she'll immediately dogeza. I wonder if I should count myself lucky just that she isn't running away. I'm paying attention so that I don't accidentally meet eyes with her.

"I heard that the Demon King revives once he dies, but is that true?"

"As if that's possible!"

I got told off.
Asking her in detail, I found out that the Demon King doesn't revive, but is apparently just passed on as a title. The previous Demon King from a few decades ago that Tena mentioned is probably Leonora's grandfather. Even

when they get defeated, the next generation steps up to take their place, which is probably why weird rumours spread amongst the humans.

“If you’re the Demon King’s daughter, then you’re the princess of the demon race… Why are you in a place like this?”

Although it’s near the Demon Race Territory, this is clearly in human territory. It seems weird to me that she’s here.

“The Romariel family has a custom of having the Demon King Successor go on a journey by themselves in order to become an adult. I wasn’t headed anywhere in particular, but I was thinking that I wanted to have a look once at the Human Race Territory, so I came here.”

It’s a custom that I’ve heard of someplace else. But still, to even think of being a princess who marched into enemy territory by herself, she sure has fire.

“I thought that the Demon King was in the Demon King Castle.”

“No, that way of thinking isn’t wrong. Because the Demon King has a lot of influence, from the moment he ascends the throne, he can’t freely go out anymore. *‘That’s why while I’m still only a successor…’* is probably one of the reasons for the custom as well.”
I see. So this is also the last period where they can ignore responsibility, huh? It’s like going on a trip after graduating from uni… Hm, maybe that’s a little different.

“How long is your journey?”

“It isn’t really fixed. I don’t have any plans of coming back until I have some kind of achievement though.”

“Achievement?”

“Like defeating the Hero that’s the enemy of the Demon Race, or maybe winning over someone useful as an ally I guess.”

I suddenly understood Leonora's circumstances, as she made an extremely displeased expression for some reason.

"Did you come to this dungeon for that reason too?"

""Gu-… That's right. I was thinking that I'd hand down punishment on the fraud Evil God, and depending on the circumstances, I'd make them into my underling."

I see. I don't know what kind of position the Evil God holds amongst the Demon Race, but at the very least, it's someone that you wouldn't be forgiven for selfishly impersonating. Having said that though, it's unbearable being attacked due to a misunderstanding even though I never called myself the Evil God, so I'd like her to do some serious reflecting.

"Then can I ask you this instead, Anri?"

I nodded to her question.

"You said that you were given that power by the Evil God, but…"

I wasn't sure if she would believe that I came from another world etc. so I've kept that part from her just like Tena, but as for being a human that was given this title and these skills by an evil god, I've already told Leonora.

"Honestly speaking, the person himself didn't call himself the Evil God. I'm just guessing based on the names of the title and skills."

"Hmm…"

Leonora sank into thought about something after I replied. When I wordlessly prompted her for an explanation, she averted her eyes and began speaking.

"No, it's not that I'm doubting your words, but… the 'Evil God' shouldn't really exist."

“? The people of Riemel and you used the term 『Evil God』. Don’t you call it that because he exists?”

“Certainly, there exists the word and concept of the Evil God. But the deity known as the Evil God doesn’t exist.”

Is this some kind of riddle? What she said “doesn’t really exist” doesn’t sound quite like she’s denying the existence of gods. It seems that Leonora said that with the belief that “gods” exist, but the “Evil God” doesn’t.

“The Evil God is an imaginary god created by the human race.”

“An imaginary god?”

That evil god was imaginary?
I actually met and talked to him though.

“Yeah. Anri, how much do you know about the gods?”

“I heard that the God of Light that created the world──Sacred Goddess Sofia, battles against the Evil God that tries to destroy the world, and leads the people through divine protection and revelations.”

“I heard about this from the rumours, but hearing it again really is shocking.”

She’s kind of looking at me really pitifully, but she won’t look me in the eyes, so I’m just guessing through. Only, I don’t have any information source about the myths of this world except for what I heard from Tena, so I’ll be troubled if Leonora looks at me like that.

“Very well. It’s a bit of a long story, but I’ll tell you the true myths passed down in the demon race.”

It’ll apparently be a long story, so I called Tena and had her brew some more tea. Since she’s bringing it over anyway, I’ll have her listen to the story as well. I won’t be able to compare it to the myths that the humans have by myself, after all.

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“The world was created by the one and only god, the Creator God.

“The Creator God created various animals as the inhabitants of the world, and finally, with the Creator God’s own form as the basis, they created humans.”

Up until here, Tena hasn’t objected and has been nodding along. There were various myths in my old world, but creation myths were all relatively similar I think.

“The human race received the favour of the Creator God, and prospered to the extreme, but that immediately reached the limit. In a world with no natural predators, there grew to be too many humans, because they couldn’t gain enough food.”

So the balance of the food chain collapsed? Without any natural predators, that seems certainly likely, but this is quite scientific for a myth.

“The Creator God gave food to the human race who entreated for help, but at the same time, worried about the situation, the Creator God took countermeasures. They created the natural enemies of the human race in order to bring the world to harmony… the demon race.

“The demon race was born, and fulfilling its duties, it opposed and attacked the human race, decreasing their numbers. With the demon race who was stronger than humans, yet less fertile than humans, as the natural enemy of the humans, peace was born.”

“That can’t be…”

Tena was stunned at the story that was so different from the myths that she knew, but certainly, with a small-numbered strong foe standing on top, you’d get the food chain back into balance, and makes more sense than the human myths that I heard form Tena.

“However, the Creator God was tormented by their own actions. There was no choice but to torment the beloved humans for the sake of their prosperity… The result of that self-contradiction was that the Creator God split themselves into three parts. Most of their power was separated into preserving the world, while their remaining power and mind was split into two.

“The two parts of the divided mind became the God of Light and God of Darkness, and they split the things that they governed into two————the sun and the moon, the day and the night, the human race and the demon race, or so it is.”

“…”

Tena couldn’t even form words. It’s probably already quite divorced from her common sense.

“That’s the myth passed down in the demon race. Those called ‘gods’ comprise only the God of Light and God of Darkness. There is no god known as the Evil God.”

Certainly, if you take the demon race’s myths as true, then the two gods are beings born from the Creator God, and aren’t separated by good and evil, or right and wrong. The God of Darkness sounds exactly evil, but it’d be like the Tsukuyomi-no-Mikoto in Japanese myths.

“To begin with, the ‘Sacred Goddess’ was something that the human race themselves attached to the God of Light afterwards, to strengthen the god’s authority. And for that sake, they proposed a fictitious Evil God as the enemy, and so the God of Light ended up fighting against it.”

“Couldn’t they have just had the God of Light fight the God of Darkness?”

“It’s just a guess, but I think that as you’d expect, they didn’t have the guts to go against the God of Darkness himself.”

“Um, excuse me, I heard that the Evil God that the Sacred Goddess battled against governed darkness, but…”

“Ahh, it’s obvious that if they didn’t clearly say anything, the idea that the Evil God was the god of darkness would come up. That’s why the demon race finds both the words ‘evil god’ and the worship of the Evil God something detestable.”

I see. So they hate it because it’s something that shows contempt for the God of Darkness that they worship. Is that why Leonora was going to punish the swindler who called himself the Evil God?
But there’s something she said that’s been on my mind.

“They worship the Evil God? Even though it’s fictional?”

“It’s fictional, but only a handful of humans know that, even though it’s something that the human race created. Even if it’s a fictitious story, as long as the people up top spread it around, it’s natural that people will think of it as the truth. It’s a weird fact, but there are apparently humans who worship the Evil God in earnest, you know.”

There were Satanic cults and demon worship in my old world too, so I guess there’s nothing weird about such people existing.
I can’t sympathise though.

“I understand what the Evil God is now. I don’t know what the guy I met was, though…”

“Yeah. Even if we debate it now, it won’t be anything but a guess.”

For now, I’ll just think of that evil god as the Evil God(?).

“I understand about the God of Light and God of Darkness, but what about the Hero and Demon King?”

“The Demon King is a being that the God of Darkness brought forth to lead the demon race. And the ones brought forth by the God of Light for the sake of the humans afraid of the Demon King threat, are called the Heroes.”

Isn’t this putting the cart before the horse?
According to what I’ve heard, the threat of the Demon King is someone who

plays a key role in making sure that humans don't increase too much, so it's supposed to be problematic if you eliminate the threat.
Perhaps sensing my doubt, Leonora gave a bitter smile as she began to continue.

"I know what you want to say. If the Demon King or demon race are defeated, then they're right back where they started, and in that respect, the Creator God's goal and God of Light's actions create a contradiction. By separating from the God of Darkness, the God of Light specialises in favouring the humans after all, so that's why things ended up the way they are."

"I see. Then what does the demon race think of the Hero?"

From the demon race's point of view, even though they're attacking humans to carry out the role given to them by god, god's underling ends up attacking them, so if you had to ask if it was unreasonable or not, then it was unreasonable.

"The God of Light's wishes don't matter. To us, the only god we worship is the God of Darkness, after all. The opinion of the demon races is that the Hero is just a strong opponent."

"I see. Speaking of the Hero, they came to this dungeon the other day."

"What? What were they like?"

I told Leonora about the Hero(lol) party that invaded this dungeon the other day. When I told her that they were muscle-brains that ran away even though they came as far as the 10th floor, she held her sides, bursting into laughter.

"Pff-, ku-ku-ku… T-, They got depressed over that puzzle and gave up, going home? …AHAHAHAHAHA-!"

"It looked like the even the Holy Sword's guidance couldn't solve the puzzle."

“I-, I’m begging you, don’t make me laugh any more… M-, My sides are splitting… I-, It hurts… ku-ku-ku…-!!!”

Seeing her continue to laugh in tears, I started to feel like a little mischief.

“You were stumped for an hour too, though.”

“PFFT-!? Y-, You were watching!?”

The moment I commented, Leonora turned shocked and bright red, and averted her eyes. What she was ridiculing the Hero(lol) Party for came back like a boomerang and pierced her.

“F-, From what I hear, that Hero seems to be an Orthodox Hero, huh.”

Ah. She’s trying to distract me. I could poke at her some more, but her words have me wondering, so I’ll leave it for now.

“What’s an Orthodox Hero? Are there different types of Heroes too?”

“Yeah, it’s a classification that our demon side came up with. Has that made the idea unfamiliar to the humans? Amongst the demon race, those called Heroes amongst the public are separated into three types. The people of this world who gain the divine protection of the God of Light are the Orthodox Heroes, the ones summoned from another world are the Summoned Heroes, and the ones who arbitrarily declare themselves heroes are the Self-Proclaimed Heroes. From least to most troublesome, you have the Summoned Heroes, the Orthodox Heroes, and the Self-Proclaimed Heroes.”

Are Other World Summonings something that happens often? Or maybe there are other people in this world that are in the same situation as me. I don’t have any intent of going out of my way to find them, but if we met by chance, it’d be nice to have a chat, huh.
But still, isn’t the order that Leonora gave kind of strange?

“You didn’t get the order wrong? The Self-Proclaimed Hero sounds the weakest, but…”

‘Yeah, they are. Hm, if you arrange it from strongest to weakest, it’s still Summoned Hero, Orthodox Hero, Self-Proclaimed Hero. The chance that someone summoned from another world has powerful skills is high, so there are lots of them that are stronger than Orthodox Heroes.”

So it’s normal even in this world that summoned people have OP skills, huh? Speaking of OP skills, mine probably count in a way, but… honestly speaking, I’d like to pass them over to someone else.

“Then why is the Self-Proclaimed Hero the most annoying one?”

“Even though they’re weak, they pop up one after another without end. What’s more, most of them aren’t much different from hoodlums, you know? Going around killing, raping, stealing as they please, they’re no different than bandits. They’re the highest priority target amongst we demons.”

Ahh, I guess it makes sense that self-alleged heroes with no qualifications would be massive attention seekers and self-centred, huh.

“I see. Then what about Summoned Heroes being the easiest to deal with?”

“They have powerful skills so when you fight them they’re strong, but to begin with they’re not people from this world, after all, so they don’t have much reason to fight. Most of the time you can avoid them by using their weak point, or by winning them over. There’s even the statistics that when the Demon King is a woman, or when they have a little sister or daughter, the Hero changes sides over 80% of the time.”

…That’s terrible.
But well, I guess people who’ll agree after being suddenly kidnapped and told to fight would be in the minority, huh.

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“By the way, I have a request.”

“Mn? What?”

Now that we've finished discussing the basics of the Heroes, I remembered that there was something I wanted to ask of her.

"Please teach magic to Tena and I."

Since I've already made friends with somebody who seems like they'd be able to use darkness magic, I'd like to take this chance to have her teach us. Both Tena and I only have the skill without any knowledge, so it was just pearls thrown before swine. To give an example, it's like somebody with pro baseball level batting skills, but zero knowledge of the game, I guess.
If darkness magic was also like the dungeon master skills in that I could just use it *somehow*, things would be a lot easier, but it seems that not everything can go so well. Or it could be that being able to just somehow use dungeon related abilities isn't because of the skills, but because of my title.
"It's not as if I won't teach you, but darkness magic is specific to the demon race, you know? You *are* technically humans, aren't you?"
That "technically" was unnecessary.

"It's fine. We have the skills."

"What? Ah, is that also a skill that the 『Evil God』 gave you? Then fine, I don't mind."

Alright! Instructor, GET.
With this, I too make my debut as a mahou shoujo; Jashin Shoujo Terrible Anri starts n-… ever.

I don't think I'll have a chance to use magic in the future either, but there's probably no loss in learning it for self-defence when the time comes. If I had to say, then rather than me who's a hikikomori, it's more necessary to Tena who goes out to town, though.

…*
…*
…*
What's more, three hours later, that Leonora ended up sitting on the floor, hugging her knees with a distant look is not my fault.

“I-, I even lost to Tena…”

“Umm, I’m sorry?”

“That’s okay.”

A student is someone who’s supposed to surpass their teacher, you know. Well, we only beat her in magic though.

Chapter 18 – Mad Feast

I've turned the entrance part of the dungeon into a fairly large hall. Because it's also the place that I chuck all the unconscious adventurers of all the other floors to, I've made it into a place with extra room. Enough room that people could hold a bit of a gathering there. When you add on the fact that monsters can't enter the room with the entrance, as well as the fact that there would be nobody reckless enough to go out of their way to come to a dungeon at night, it means deep in the night, that there wouldn't be anyone to get in your way.

…But that doesn't mean you can hold your damned sabbaths here.

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Leonora who had become my friend the other day promised to visit again before continuing her journey, but the rumour she heard in Riemel──that the Evil God was living in this dungeon──was on my mind, so I had Tena head to town to investigate.
The result was that I discovered that there were two sources to that rumour.

The first was 1~2 months ago, when around the time that the dungeon transformed, there was an attack on a church belonging to the Sacred Light Church. In the middle of broad daylight, some being attacked the church, easily broke through the barrier that should have repelled evil, and then left with a sneer.
The second was a certain piece of equipment found in this dungeon. The sword blessed by the Evil God contained a terrifying curse and power, and was guessed to have been directly enchanted by the Evil God.
Because of these two facts, a rumour about the Evil God living in this dungeon began to be spread.

…I have no idea what those two incidents are about. Absolutely no idea, I said.

…*
I don't know how far the rumour's spread, but at the very least, it's apparently been spread enough that Evil God worshippers have gathered in large numbers. This is something that I'm realising keenly enough that I'm getting a headache because of what I'm seeing on screen.

There was a bonfire lit in the middle of the room, and what's more, I don't know where they brought it from, but oddly they have a large cauldron on top of it. There was a suspicious liquid boiling inside the cauldron, and it was surrounded by a faint pink smoke. I'm seeing this through a screen so I don't know how it smells, but it isn't hard to imagine that there's a strong odour spread throughout that room.
Surrounding the bonfire were close to a hundred people looking the way they did when they were brought into this world, and displaying shameful behaviour. There were those dancing madly with all their heart, as well as those embracing each other and indulging in each others' bodies nearby. Perhaps the smoke that's filling the room is some sort of drug, but everyone seems to be in ecstasy.

Truly a mad frenzy of a feast, befitting of being called a black sabbath. It definitely doesn't feel like I can stay sane watching this scene, but as the master of this dungeon, I have to properly observe them. I'm definitely not peeking on them because I'm hugely curious.

As the feast went on, their excitement grew even further, until it finally reached the climax. Amongst the screams, only one person remained clothed and stepped forward into the centre of the room.
He was a young blonde man, who looked to be in the early half of his 20s, and with a handsome face, was clad in a priest's outfit. When he stood in front of the cauldron, he raised his right hand before the followers before him. That moment, the frenzied feast stopped all at once, and a tense silence filled the room.

『We now begin the ritual of offerings!』

To the young priest's voice, shouts of joy that surpassed even the feast thus far spread through the room as though tearing apart the silence. In the

midst of this abnormal atmosphere, four large men carried forth a stone table, and placed it before the young priest.

Since they said ‘offerings’, are they going to perform a sacrificial ritual?
Usually goats are sacrificed, right?
Judging from the atmosphere I can see on screen, I’m getting a bad feeling, though.

As though confirming my premonitions, what they brought forth was a girl of about 8 years old, dressed in a plain outfit. With chestnut hair that reached her shoulders, the girl had her hands bound before her, and a gag stuffed in her mouth, and was being forcefully brought out in front of them.
And then, perhaps realising that she was going to be attacked, with tears in her eyes she frantically tried to resist, but it was just the strength of a young child after all, and she could only offer a meagre resistance.
When she was brought to the stone altar, she was stripped of what she was wearing, and with her hands pulled out above her head, her hands and legs were bound and fixed to the altar by a rope that ran along under it.

『Nnnnnn――――――!!』

The girl tried to kick and struggle, but the rope tightly stopped her, and the best she could do was twist her body a little. While looking down at the girl, the young priest brought out a dagger from his pocket. To that deadly weapon that glinted in the light, the girl shook her head as though saying *no, no,* but there was nobody there that cared.
『O god of ours, please accept our humble offering.』

Having said that, the young priest aimed the overhead dagger at the girl’s heart, and unwaveringly brought it down, and… wai-, that’s no joke!
I was being overwhelmed by this unreal spectacle, but suddenly coming back to my senses, I flusteredly activated the transfer circle above the altar, and teleported the girl to where I was. After an instant of light, the bound and gagged girl was lying down in front of me.
It was some pretty close timing so, feeling worried, I checked how the girl was, but there was no blood coming out of that young chest of hers. I was touching the centre of her chest to check it out, but perhaps because of the fear of almost being killed, her heart was currently pounding away.

However, I could at least feel a definite heartbeat.
It seems that I made it in time.

..*
While I was feeling relieved, the high pitched sound of something breaking reached my ears.

Wondering what it was, I turned around, and what reached my eyes was Tena standing at the entrance to the room, and fragments of porcelain scattered by her feet. It seems that Tena had intended on bringing me tea, but accidentally dropped and broke the tea set. I was going to tell her to clean it up seeing as she showed no signs of moving for some reason, but seeing the expression on her face made me swallow my words.

“A-, Anri-sama…”

Shock, anger, grief, despair… with an expression filled with those mixed emotions, she was looking my way, stiffened up. I have no intention of scolding her *that* badly just for breaking a tea set though.
“W-, Wh-, Who is that child…?”

Her words reminded me that it wasn’t just me in her gaze, and that she was looking at the little girl who was the other person in the room. Seeing the girl who was looking up at me with tearful eyes and a terrified expression, I suddenly and calmly came back to myself, and tried looking at our situation from an objective point of view.

A little girl of about 8 years old was stripped nude, with her hands and feet bound and her mouth gagged with tears in her eyes.
And seemingly looming over that girl was I, who was touching her slim chest.

I-, It’s a pervert… Wai-, that’s wrong!
Having understood how I looked, I tried to explain to Tena in a fluster, and turned towards her.

“I can expla-…”

“———— -!”

Before I could call out to her, Tena burst out of the room in tears.

Wai-, stop. Don’t run.
At least tidy up the broken tea set.

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It’s become quite a headache. If I don’t properly explain things to Tena later, it’ll become a fixed impression that not only am I into other women, I have a preference for little girls. I also have to do something about this girl that’s bound and lying on the floor.
But what I really need to urgently deal with before anything else, is the sabbath with the vanished sacrifice. Because it was something I did in the spur of the moment, I have to fix it up somehow. What’s more, I don’t want something like this to happen again either, so I need to do something about *that* as well.
And so, I’ll be undoing your bindings later, but sorry, I’ll need to have you lying on the ground for a little longer, girl.
When I looked at the screen, the followers were naturally in a great uproar about the sacrifice that disappeared the instant it was killed. There were also people who were terrified because of this unforseen incident happening during a holy ritual. But when the young priest with the dagger turned around and raised his hand, the uproar quieted down.

『Have you all not seen it yourself!? Our god has accepted our humble offering.』

After the followers quieted down for an instant, they raised an explosive cheer. After the young priest gave a satisfied nod, he turned back to the altar and waited there silently. He was probably thinking that the god they worshipped would show a response, and was continuing to wait there, hoping for a reaction.

In this situation, it’ll get troublesome if I don’t respond, huh? I really just want to ignore this and go to sleep, but if I do that, I can’t predict what these guys will do.

Now then, what should I do? After having snatched the girl myself, I doubt they'd listen if I told them at this point that I didn't need sacrifices after all, and if I gave the girl back, she'd probably be killed. Having said that though, if I praise them well done, then the possibility that they'll continue to do this from now on is high.

『…Untasty.』

After thinking about it, I decided to compromise. It's a tactic where I tell them that I didn't like the sacrifice they gave me, and next time to bring something else.
Ah-, I forgot to use the cursed Tena doll. Well, I guess that's fine this time.

『Eh-? Ah-… Please excuse us! Umm, did it not suit your esteemed palate?』

『Humans, demons, unpalatable. Oxen, pigs, chickens, goats──animals recommended.』

『U-, Understood! U-, Um… I am truly sorry to trouble you, but is there no mistake in that you are our god?』

Perhaps they felt something wrong with my lack of Evil God-ness, but it seems they were doubting me a little. But telling me to play the Evil God well is unreasonable, so I hope they'll cut me some slack on that.

『Indeed.』

『Oohhh! Receiving your words is the acme of honour!』

『Although it did not suit my palate, it is true that you have done me service with your offering. As such, I bestow this staff.』

I enchanted a staff that I got from a mage that invaded, and teleported it atop the altar in front of the young priest. I'm a fake Evil God, but the enchantment is the real thing, so I can probably dodge most of the suspicion if I hand this over.

『T-, This is!? T-, To think that I would be granted a divine weapon-!』

After the young priest reverently picked up the staff that I left on the altar, first he was shocked, then he cried tears of joy.

『Continue to be zealous in your faith.』

『Understood-!』

Seeing the young priest bow deeply beyond the screen, I felt relieved at having somehow dealt with it. I saw onscreen that the young priest had held up the staff and was giving a speech to the followers, but I don't care anymore.
Even if this happens again, they'll just be sending me food, so I'll just think of this as a good bargain.

…*
I've dealt with the issue of the sabbath now, so I undid the bindings on the girl who was still lying on the floor. I was wondering why she was so silent, but apparently she had passed out from the terror. I think she was still conscious when she was teleported in here, but I wonder when she fainted.

While wondering about this, Tena who had burst out from the room earlier entered the office.

"……"

"Tena?"

Wondering what was up since Tena showed no signs of moving, I called out to her when with a determined expression, she suddenly took off the miko outfit that she was wearing. Stripped down to her underwear, amongst the youthfulness of her age, was just the slightest hint of seductiveness.
Perhaps because she was shy, that white skin of hers, illuminated by the lamp in the room, was tinged faintly red.

"Um… Anri-sama. If you really want to no matter what, then I…"

Hearing her words, I unconsciously stretched my hand towards her──

…*
──and shot her in the face with a darkness bullet.
I'm straight. There's no sign of any men around me though.

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After having returned to her senses, Tena cleaned up the broken tea set and taken some basic care of the girl, I explained to her what happened and somehow managed to resolve her misunderstanding. Having properly understood the situation, Tena turned bright red and apologised, but I won't forgive her.
I do think that her misunderstanding couldn't be helped given the scene that she saw, but I'm not happy with how she acted afterwards, so I've decided not to let her off so easily, and punish her instead.
Even if I say punishment, it's not like it'll be anything weird; I'm just going to have her sit in seiza for an hour. *Is that all?* you might think, but to people of this world who aren't used to seiza, staying in that unfamiliar posture should be quite a tough punishment. As proof of that, after an hour passed, her legs were numb enough that she couldn't stand, and she was suffering on the ground.
Seeing this made me feel a little mischievous, so I lightly poked at Tena's leg.
"Hii-!?"

Tena gave a sensitive response as her upper body jumped up, but apparently moving her body made her numb legs tingle, so she writhed about like a caterpillar. Deeply impressed by this wonderful reaction, I continued to poke at Tena who was trying to escape.
-poke poke-
"Ah-! …Sto-! …Y-, You can't! …Please don't poke mee!"

-poke poke- …This is kind of fun.
…*
"And so, what will you do with that girl?"

Perhaps because the numbness had finally gone, Tena was standing up now, but her face was still tinged red, and her eyes were oddly teary. Because of her reaction I accidentally got into teasing her, but if I do it any more I think

she'll dislike me for real, so I'll stop it here.
By 'girl', she was probably referring to the sacrificial girl that she had taken care of just a while ago. Tena gave her a bath and a change of clothes, and she was now sleeping on a bed in the bedroom.

"I'll return her to her parents."

Obviously. I don't know where they abducted this girl from, but considering both the issue of proper morals and the issue of avoiding troublesome things, returning her to her parents should be the best answer.

"But, that girl seems to be a slave…"

I unconsciously froze at Tena's words.

"Slave?"

"Yes. She was wearing a collar."

She was wearing, a collar? I was in a rush, so I don't remember it well. But now that you mention it, I do get the feeling that the clothing that she was originally wearing was the kantoui for slaves.

…Crap. If she's a slave, then this changes things quite a bit. If one of the cultists from just now was the master that bought her, then it was their right to decide what to do with this girl, and actually, I who saved the girl just became a thief. If she was abducted then I thought I could search for her parents, and maybe find them, but if she was sold as a slave, then I don't have much chance in that either. There's nothing I can do.

"And so, what do you plan on doing?"

Tena asked me this as though trying to finish me off, when I had sunken into silence.
…What do I do?

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“Hii-!?”

When our eyes met, the adorable girl with chestnut-hair gave a spasmed cry, and hid behind Tena. It’s a spectacle that I’ve gotten used to over these last few days, and the girl in question is the sacrifice from the other day. We managed to find out that her name was Lili, and that she had lost her parents in an epidemic, but apparently she didn’t really know anything more than that, and we still don’t know where she came from, or how she came to be a slave.
In the end, I couldn’t think of any ideas, so I decided that we’d raise her in this dungeon for a while at least. From what we’ve heard, it seems that it’ll be impossible to return her to her parents.

“Lili, Anri-sama isn’t scary, you know?”

Incidentally, the one who found all this out was Tena, not me. Lili had apparently grown attached to Tena who had taken care of her, and always follows her around. In contrast, she’s afraid of me, and just as you saw just now, even when I try to talk to her, she immediately runs away from me.

While seeing the two of them getting along like sisters, I sighed.

Chapter 19 – Starvation Tactics

The goals of the intruders who come to this dungeon are varied, but if I had to roughly classify them, they'd be those looking for money, and those looking for fame.
If you succeeded in conquering a dungeon, you'd receive quite a reward after all, and if that dungeon's level of difficulty was high, then your name and fame would spread.
With the spread of the Evil God rumours, I was worried that my income sourc-… I mean, the number of adventurers would decline, but I really didn't have to worry because they began to increase instead.
Apparently even the guild was getting frustrated with the lack of progress with the dungeon capture, and increased the reward.
Drawn by the promise of 100 gold coins, each day an average of 10 parties would come to the dungeon in challenge, and after using up all their strength in the top floors, they'd be thrown out to the upper floors.
At present, nobody has reached the redeployed No Life King yet.

…*
However, since 3 days ago, the intruders suddenly stopped coming.

…*
I was spending each day toiling away at assorting the weapons and armour since they were always being collected and sent in, but suddenly nothing was coming.
Wondering what was going on, I had a look at each of the dungeon floors, but they were filled with only monsters, and not a trace of an intruder.

On the first day, I was being optimistic and thinking "Well, I guess there are days like this too.".

On the second day, I began to think "Something's wrong.".

And then today, on the third day, having decided that there was something abnormal about the situation, I decided to have Tena secretly search around the dungeon.

..*
“Anri-sama, it’s terrible! The area around the dungeon has been sealed off!”

Having come back into the dungeon through a back entrance after I told her to check the surroundings, Tena came flying in with a changed expression.

“Sealed off? Who did, and why?”

Did the Adventurers Guild create a blockade because of the dangers of this dungeon?
But there hasn’t been a single death yet, and in a sense, this is the safest dungeon in the world.
I don’t think there’d be a reason for the guild to do such a thing.

“I do not know! There are people gathered near the entrance to the dungeon and working on some kind of project, and among them are people creating a blockade and forcefully turning back the adventurers who are coming here from town!”

A project near the dungeon entrance?
At the very least, as long as they’re forcefully turning away adventurers, it probably isn’t something the Adventurers Guild is doing, and if it was the Guild, they could just withdraw the reward after all.
It’s no good. Just hearing what Tena said doesn’t help me understand the situation at all.
Thinking that I might figure something out if I had a look with my own eyes, I got off my fat butt.

Just as I was about to teleport into the rear exit, I remembered that Leonora taught me darkness magic and I now had a means of observing things from a distance.
If I used *that*, there wouldn’t be a need to go all the way outside… Wai-, in that case, does that mean that I didn’t need to send Tena out either?
This was supposed to be a good chance for me to go outside for the first

time in a while, but it seems that my hikikomori lifestyle got extended.
It feels like I'll get fat from the lack of exercise.
Ah-, the "fat butt" that I mentioned earlier isn't a physical description, so don't misunderstand.
I was talking about the possibility of getting fat in the future, and by no means am I fat right this moment.
As you can see, even my stomach is… **-squish-**… ah-…
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I teleported a crow that I made of mana to the back entrance of the dungeon.
I wasn't using the dungeon core's screen, and instead was using a mirror made from darkness magic that showed me what the crow heard and saw.
Though it had the benefit of not necessarily being limited to the dungeon, in exchange there was a need to move the crow from place to place which wouldn't be instant, so it used more mana than my abilities as a dungeon master.
But as for the mana expenditure, going from how much mana I have, it really isn't much, so I don't really mind all that much.

After flying out from the back entrance and soaring into the sky, the crow moved to a place where I could see the dungeon entrance, and stopped on a tree.
In the mirror that reflected the vision of the crow were people working on something or other around the dungeon entrance, just like Tena said.
The entrance to this dungeon is on a small hill by the side of a lake that you can reach by following one of the highways to the end.
Around the entrance, there's a bit of flat ground, but because nobody's really maintaining it, it's a mess of grass and weeds that grow as much as they want.
No, perhaps it would be better to say that *"it was"* a mess of grass and weeds.
It probably happened during these last 3 days, but the grass was mown, the few trees that should have been growing here were cut down, and the space was just like an open plaza now.
And in that place were people measuring the ground for something, as well as carried in materials here and there.

…It's almost as though they're building something, but to think they'd construct something near my dungeon of all places.

『Harvin-sama! We have finished measuring the land.』

『Well done. Tell the results to the planning team, and then have a rest.』

『Sir!』

Ah-, amongst the people working was somebody that I recognised.
The person firing off instructions to the people around him was the blonde priest that had been in charge of the sabbath the other day.
Which means… It can't be that the ones doing the construction are the Evil God Cult, can it?
I'm kind of getting an incredibly bad feeling about this.

『It seems that the adventurers are trying to forcefully break through the blockade!』

『!? I will head there immediately, so hold on! They can not be allowed to interfere with the construction of the temple devoted to our god!』

『Understood!』

Geh-, I knew it.
It seems that my bad feeling was immediately proven to be correct.
I was just trying to act like the Evil God when I told them to be zealous in their faith, but building a temple is probably *too* zealous.
Just how much money are they planning on investing in this?
He looks like he's in the early half of his twenties, so I was finding it weird that he was the group leader, but could it be that the young priest comes from a rich merchant or noble family?
To begin with, what do they want from the Evil God anyway?
From what Leonora said, the Evil God doesn't even exist in this world, so although I don't know how many times they've held a sabbath like the other day, they probably haven't gotten anything back from them.
All they're really doing is making useless endeavours.

Wai-, is it my fault!?
Up until now the (fake) object of worship hadn't shown them any responses, but if they then received words and a treasure from offering a sacrifice, then I can assent to their rampage right now.

『You're the leader of these fuckers!? We're adventurers here to challenge the dungeon, so why the fuck are you getting in our way!?』

『Blasphemous fools who would challenge our god, in Her place, I shall hand down your death penalties. I swear on this divine weapon granted as the proof of our faith, that I will not let anybody pass!』

The adventurers were climbing over the barricades, while the young priest was standing in their way.
A critically tense atmosphere filled the whole area.

『Shit, you're fucking insane! Oi, let's clear these fuckers out!』

『AAHH!』

『Fool, fool, FOOL——! I am the agent of your divine punishment, Sect Founder Harvin! En garde!』

But wow, that priest sure is into it.

『Fucken eat this!』

『A pathetic effort!』

When the adventurer had tried to cut him down, the young priest──Harvin, met their blade with the staff in his hand.
The moment that their two weapons collided, following a high pitched sound, part of the adventurer's sword was sent flying from halfway down the blade.

『I-, It can't be…』

『Behold the might of our god!』

After sending the dumbfounded adventurer flying with a yakuza kick, Harvin held up the staff in his hands to the heavens.
Black lightning ran along the staff, and shot out towards the adventurers.

『GUAHHHHHHHHH———!』

『G-, God damn it…』

A number of people could bear it without collapsing, but Harvin ran towards them and brought down his staff.

『IMMEDIATE!』

『GUGYAH-!?』

『PUNISHMENT!』

『GOHU-!』

『PUNISHMENT, PUNISHMENT, DIVINE PUNISHMENT————!』

『…-!』

The adventurers couldn't move well because of the lightning damage, and Harvin knocked them out one by one.
By the time he stopped, his breathing rough, all of the adventurers were lying on the ground.

『OOHHH! As expected of Harvin-sama!』

『Our Sect Founder!』

The surrounding followers looked at him with reverent eyes.
Nobody else is commenting on it, so I'll be commenting but, even though he's a priest, he was actually a melee class this whole time!?
He used a lightning attack, but there was no chanting, so that was probably the power of the staff. Harvin himself used nothing but hand-to-hand combat. Even though I completely thought that he was a mage or a cleric, so

I gave him a staff… This is fraud.
Wai-, couldn't I have just looked at his status?

『All by the guidance of our god. The rest of you must strive further in your devotion.』

『Sir!』

I'm not guiding you, I'm definitely not guiding you.
At the very least, I wouldn't do this sort of thing.

『Now then, please toss them outside the barricade or something.』

『Understood.』

Having told them to throw out the unconscious adventurers, he returned to giving instructions on the construction of the temple.

But still, Harvin was stronger than expected.
As you'd expect, he's weaker than Leonora, but if the Hero(lol) was careless, wouldn't Harvin be a match for him?
At this rate, no matter how many adventurers come, they'll probably just be eliminated and won't make it to the dungeon.

I don't know how long it'll take to finish the temple, but at the very least it seems that the time required will be in the order of years.
If I lose my income source-, I mean, the adventurers, then I'll probably run dry before the temple is finished.
Even if the temple is completed before I *do* run dry, all it'll do is stop more adventurers from coming, so in the end it's the same.
S-, Starvation tactics are for cowards…-!

I tried borrowing Leonora's words, but these guys aren't doing that on purpose, and out of goodwill instead, which makes it all the more terrible.
If I play the Evil God again and told them to stop, then I think they'd listen, but I can't think of a good reason for telling them to stop the temple construction.
I'm beat. I can't think of anything.

Oh yeah, it's at times like this that the Hero is supposed to appear, right?
I want him to crush the plot of these detestable cultists, and take back my peace and quiet.
Where the heck did those guys go, anyway?

While entrusting a thread of hope to that Hero Party coming back and crushing the ambitions of the cultists, I looked resentfully at the progressing construction.

Chapter 20 – The Battle of the Evil God Temple

“Anri, are you in!?”

I turned in shock towards Leonora who had suddenly burst in while I was having tea with Tena and Lili.
Because we accidentally met eyes, she turned blue from the effect of the mystic eyes, and began to dogeza on the spot.
When I averted my eyes in a fluster, I asked Tena to brew some for Leonora too, after she had finished helping her up.

“S-, Suddenly going through a horrible time like that.”

“I-, I said I was sorry.”

“No, well, it’s my fault for looking at your eyes though.”

Leonora sighed, after having sat down to some tea and catching her breath.
We introduced her to Lili as well, who hadn’t been here the last time she stayed.
Lili’s shyness of strangers came into play and she hid behind Tena, but once she realised that Leonora was harmless, she was very quickly able to speak to her normally. …Even though I’ve been living with her for days now. This is unfair.
Also, it turns out that the reason Lili kept running away from me was because of the miasma filling the dungeon. It took me a while to notice since it had no effect on Tena and I, but even if I call this place the residential area, it’s just something I decided arbitrarily and it’s still inside the dungeon so of course there’s miasma here. Apparently the combo attack from my Evil God Aura and the fear inducing miasma makes me seem ridiculously terrifying. Of course, since the miasma is a characteristic of the dungeon, it’s not something I can stop even if I wanted to. That’s why I settled the problem by tampering with the circulation so that it’d suck out the miasma from the residential area and blow it into other areas. The miasma in the other floors might have gotten worse by the same amount, but well, I guess

that can't be helped.
Having understood the problem and expelling the miasma from the residential area, Lili finally stopped running away from me. Even so, whenever our eyes met, she'd run away as you'd expect though.

"And so, what's up, all of a sudden? From how you were acting earlier, it seems like you have something to say, but?"

"Yeah, that's right. While I was travelling I heard a disturbing rumour, you see, so I came back here in a fluster."

"A disturbing rumour?"

Just hearing that was disturbing enough, and now I'm scared to hear the rest.
Speaking of which, didn't I hear the Evil God rumour from Leonora as well?

"There's a rumour spreading that there are Evil God Cultists gathering around Riemel town, you see."

"Ahh, so it's about that."

I unconsciously relaxed.
Sorry to Leonora who journeyed all the way back here to tell me, but if that's what this is all about, then I already know.
The Hero(lol) Party let me down and didn't come, and though the construction of the temple that was arbitrarily set outside the dungeon entrance is still going slowly, it's making progress.
It's certainly troublesome, but it's nothing life-threatening, so I'll just relax and take my time to come up with a countermeasure.
But still, going by the way she said things, could it be that Leonora didn't see the stuff around the dungeon herself? Since I told her about the back entrance as well, if she came in from there, it makes sense that she'd arrive here without passing through the blockade.

"Mu, so it was true after all? In that case, the rumour that I heard is seeming closer and closer to fact."

“That wasn’t the disturbing rumour?”

“No, the fact that Evil God Cultists are gathering is nothing more than the precondition. You see, the disturbing rumour I heard is about the Order of the Sacred Light being gathered to subjugate the gathering cultists.”

Order of the Sacred Light?

“T-, That can’t be…-!?”

“…?”

It seems that Tena knows something since she turned pale, but as expected, perhaps Lili was too young to know, because seeing Tena she just tilted her head in wonder.

“You seem quite relaxed, huh. Even though you should know quite well what this means.”

“Uh, no, what’s the Order of the Sacred Light?”

Hearing my question, Leonora and Tena fell forward powerlessly.

“Y-, You… You don’t know of the Order of the Sacred Light? I’ve been thinking this for a while, but are you really a human?”

“Anri-sama… The Order of the Sacred Light is just as it sounds; a knight order formed by the call of the Church of Sacred Light. Only the Pope has the right to call them, and it comprises knights from various countries.”

In other words, something like the Crusaders of this world?
Also, Leonora sure is rude. It’s inevitable that I don’t know about this world.

“It seems that you don’t understand, so I’ll say this as well, but the state religion of all the human nations should be the Faith of Sacred Light. Becoming the target of the Order of the Sacred Light is in other words becoming the enemy of the entire human race.”

NANI?
The degree of danger just shot to another level.
From what I hear, certainly the Evil God Cultists are the enemy of the Church, but didn't things get blown up way too quickly?
Although it's true that cultists are gathering, is all of the human race joining forces just for a group that's only a few hundred at best?
When I asked this, Leonora nodded as though it were natural.

"Certainly, it does feel unnatural that they would mobilise on this huge a scale just for the Evil God Cultists. It makes sense that we should view them as having an objective beyond this, I suppose."

"An objective beyond this?"

"The investigation of the rumoured Evil God, and then the subjugation, or sealing of it, I suppose."

I see. If it wasn't just the cultists, but the Evil God as well, then I can assent to this exaggerated mobilisation.
To get attacked by all of humanity like this, this Evil God person sure has it rough too, huhh~

"I think you already understand, but it's you, you know?"

I know it's me, dammmit.
At least allow me some escapism.

"I'm not the Evil God."

"That isn't the problem right now. Whether or not it's true, if the human race recognises you as such, then it's the same thing."

Certainly, whether or not I'm the Evil God, as long as the top brass of each country and the Church recognise me as the Evil God, it won't change the fact that I'll be their target for elimination.
But why I'm being recognised as the Evil God is a mystery.

“The leaders of the countries and Church should know that the Evil God is imaginary.”

“Mu, now that you mention it, that’s true…”

According to what I heard from Leonora earlier, the Evil God was a fictitious enemy created to give authority to the Church of Sacred Light.
Normal people or those in lower positions are one thing, but the higher-ups know that the Evil God doesn’t exist, so they’d probably just laugh at rumours of the Evil God appearing.

“Or perhaps it’s *because* they know that it is fictitious. It is not strange to think that the subjugation will be easy since its just a fake and self-styled Evil God. And what’s more, fake though it may be, as long as ordinary people and believers think that it’s the real thing, they can heighten their authority by subjugating it.”
Even though I don’t recall ever calling myself that.
But I also think that Leonora’s train of thought is correct.
It’s nuisancing others, but as long as the people believe that it’s true, regardless of whether it is or not, they probably won’t be able to leave it alone.

“And so, when will the Order of the Sacred Light be coming?”

“I don’t know that much, but if you consider them as being gathered and prepared from various nations, at the very least a few months, and perhaps it might even take a year, depending.”

As you’d expect, once it gets to this massive a scale, they can’t mobilise that easily, huh?
It was quite a headache of a topic, but the fact that I still have room to think is great luck.
I really can’t relax with the situation as it is, but since I have time, I’ll carefully figure out which choice is best.

..*
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..*

…There was a period when I thought like that too.

“Leonora.”

“T-, This isn’t my fault, you know!?”

Using the crow from last time, the surroundings of the dungeon were projected onto the mirror.
And on that mirror were the marching forms of soldiers on the highway that led towards the dungeon.
Meeting the cultist barrier, the soldiers stopped to set up a camp, but they kept arriving one after another, and the difference in power was ridiculous.

“It hasn’t even been half a month… This isn’t what you said.”

“L-, Like I said, this isn’t my fault. To begin with, isn’t this strange!? Why were they able to mobilise soldiers so quickly!?”

Leonora exclaimed with vigour and anger, but it felt like she was just trying to direct the blame away from herself.
Well, I had her stay in the dungeon out of worry, so I have no intention of blaming her though.
Like she said, it certainly is too early, no matter how you look at it.

“No, wait. Can you make the image of the soldiers bigger?”

Leonora asked me this, as though having noticed something.
I gave a nod, before moving the crow closer to the formations.
Leonora stared hard at the soldiers reflected on the mirror, but finally, she gave a nod, having seemingly assented to something.

“I see. I understand the trick now. The ones marching right now are all soldiers from the Kingdom of Fortera.”

The ‘Kingdom of Fortera’ is, if I remember correctly, the country that this place belongs to.
All of them are soldiers of the Kingdom? Wasn’t the Order of Sacred Light a coalition force?

Or could it be that these guys are something other than the Order of Sacred Light?

“They’re probably the vanguard. The allied forces will take time to assemble, so they probably intend to have the soldiers that can immediately mobilise do the scouting and planning first. Given Fortera’s location, they’d get here quickly after all.”

I see. I don’t know if it’s something that Fortera wished for itself, or if it was pushed into it, but for the role of vanguard, it’s natural that it’s Fortera. According to Leonora, the location of the Kingdom is adjacent to the Demon Race Territory, so in a place like that, it wouldn’t be strange to have a standing army to a certain extent.

“In that case, they won’t attack us immediately, right?”

“If they’re devoted enough to play their role, that is.”

Leonora spoke hesitantly.
As though asking for the true meaning behind her words, I gazed at the beautiful face of the girl with the flowing silver hair. …She averted her eyes.

“From Fortera’s point of view, this is something they should like to tidy up before the main force of the Order gets here. As long as this is the Kingdom’s territory, then by all rights, this is a problem that should be dealt with by the Kingdom itself. Although the Evil God may be the enemy of all of the human race, if a problem within their country is dealt with by the Church or the Order, they will come to owe them a favour.”

I see. If they owe them a favour, then in later negotiations they’ll be at a disadvantage, so it’s natural that they;d want to avoid that.

“What’s more, looking at the scene from earlier, its clear to anyone that they appear to have enough power to deal with it even without waiting for the main force. Would it not be difficult for them to sit still for months without doing anything?”

“Certainly.”

I don't know exactly how many soldiers Fortera has, but they should have thousands even by a conservative estimate, and if I'm unlucky, they might even have over ten thousand.
And on the other hand, the cultists have stopped with the construction and taken up positions, but they only have a few hundred… There's nothing to even discuss.
On top of that, if this is the standing army of the Kingdom's military, then they're all professional soldiers, but the fighters among the cultists number only a few dozen at best, while the rest are normal people.
No matter how hard the merry Sect Founder tries, it's impossible for him to overturn this difference in war potential; he's truly a drop in the bucket.

There's no way to shake the military superiority of the Kingdom after all, and even *I* think it would be completely meaningless to wait for the Order.
On the contrary, if they waited in this situation, wouldn't they be liable to be slandered as cowards?
"There's a good chance that they will attack once their camp is complete. What will you do?"

"…"

'What will I do'? That's what *I* want to know.
I didn't think they'd come so quickly, so I haven't thought of anything.
I'm a normal person who likes to put off the unpleasant. (When it comes to food alone, I'll save the best for last though.)
I was told that there would be a few months until this happened, so I thought it would be fine if I thought about this stuff *next* month.
I guess there are about 3 rough choices that I can make.

(1) Fight: For ye fools who hath roused me from my repose, I award ye with death! (fight to the bitter end)
(2) Surrender: P-, Please just spare me my life! (naked dogeza)
(3) Escape: Cya, Totssan! (making a break for it)

For now, let's think in a direction where I won't be doing (2).
I have no intention of doing a naked dogeza after all, and even if I did, what lies after would probably just be a tragic fate.
(3) is looking ridiculously attractive, but the problem is where I should run

to.
It seems that I've made an enemy of the entire human race, so I guess the only place I could escape to is the Demon Race Territory.
I wonder if I can't use Leonora's connections to give me asylum.
I looked towards my only ray of hope, Leonora, but it seems that she interpreted my glance as asking for her opinion, because she continued speaking.

"It does certainly seem that with the difference in numbers, you'll lose in a head-on confrontation, huh. Were it me, I think that using the geography of the dungeon to fight a siege battle would be effective, though."

Ah. Seems like it's no good. She's completely in the mood to fight.
When she asked "What will you do?", I guess she meant "How are you going to fight?".
Speaking of which, although she was better than the Hero(lol) Party, Leonora was actually quite a musclehead too.
I'm thankful just that she's staying by my side in a situation like this, but if I asked her to give me refuge in the Demon Race Territory, it feels like she'd abandon me in scorn.
If I can't hide in the Demon Race Territory, then (3) is impossible as well…
Is there only (1)?
But feeling pain, and being killed, and while I'm at it, killing someone as long as I'm in no danger, are things I'd like to avoid though.

No, thinking about it again, defeating the main force of the Kingdom or the Order isn't my goal, so I guess there isn't a reason to fight them head-on?
Now that it's come to this, the best result for me would be to have them think of me as powerful and withdraw their troops, as well as holding back on making a move against me in the future.
Even if I use brute force to drive away the Kingdom's forces today, if I continue to get attacked in the future, there won't be any point.
I'll put on a flashy performance and make our side look stronger than it is, and make them think that it's impossible to fight me… This is the best way.

…It's nothing but a bluff though.

If the idea that I'm impossible to fight against begins to spread, then peace negotiations should be possible.
Negotiations are impossible for me, so I plan on pushing this onto somebody else though.

Fortunately, I have an idea of something flashy enough. When I told Leonora about what I thinking, she immediately went to prepare.
Honestly speaking, I didn't think Leonora would be very happy about it, but she was surprisingly willing to help. Although she was speaking like that before, even she should understand that frontal attacks are no good. If it's just the Kingdom's army in front of us then it might be another matter, but if the Order of the Sacred Light comes along later, we'll be crushed by their numbers. The only chance at overturning this situation is right now.

Now then, let's begin my one in a lifetime gamble.

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..*

"…There was a period when I thought like that too." is a Baki reference lol
The whole scene is something like,
" 'Boxing is an incomplete martial art because it lacks kicks…' huh? There was a period when I thought like that too."
Note: Lupin (of Lupin Third) often refers to Zenigata as Tottsan, a form of address that is usually translated as "Old Man" or "Pops"

Chapter 21 – Evil God Average

Holding my hand to the dungeon core, for the first time in a while I added a floor.
However, what I was doing this time was different to what I'd been doing up until now. So far, I'd just been adding floors normally, and since this was a cave-type dungeon, the floors were added underground. In contrast, this time what I was doing was adding floors contrary to the nature of this dungeon.
The first time I needed to pay 30,000,000 extra, like some sort of harassment, but with that, I could build floors both below and above ground. …Aahh, even though I'd finally saved up that much. The dragon I wanted is moving away from my reach.
After adding a special floor one time, after that I was able to add on more surface floors just by using the normal floor-adding function. The surface floors weren't just rooms, and so I needed to choose how to have the exterior as well which was a bother, but since most of the settings were already set, I finished it quickly.
Leonora was standing next to me with a cramped expression, but I paid her no heed and finished processing the final floor.

There weren't any changes to that room, but with this, I felt that I would be able to give a good performance, and so I turned to look at the scenery reflected on the mirror that I had left beside me.

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The Kingdom's soldiers who had completed their formation, the cultists who were ready to martyr themselves in opposition of the Kingdom; all of the people there were frozen in shock and awe, with their eyes fixed on that one spot.
On the thus far empty clearing that had been created to serve as the base of the temple, suddenly appeared a gargantuan building, as though piercing the heavens.
That mostly black palace was designed with an exquisite balance of holiness

and dreadfulness, and the building itself was like a work of art.
Everyone there had surely realised it instinctively; that this was the temple in which the Evil God lived.

That's right. On the top of the 5th surface floor, I established a temple.
Because it requires too many mana points, to begin with no other dungeon master would build a surface floor in an underground dungeon. Because of that, people don't know that the act in itself is possible, so it's probably quite flashy enough.
If they misunderstand this as a power I have because I'm the Evil God, then it'll be even more effective.

For the cincher, I brought Leonora and Tena up to the top floor with a teleport.
From the balcony of the spire, I could see the dumbfounded and frozen figures of the Forteran Army and Evil God Cultists.

"Leonora, Tena, if you'd please."

"Yeah, got it."

"Understood, Anri-sama."

Leonora and Tena began chanting magic together.
I've asked the two of them to help set the stage for my show.

What Leonora chanted was a spell that forcibly changed the battlefield to nighttime, in order to heighten the effectiveness of darkness magic.
What Tena chanted was a foothold creation spell used for aerial battles.
An area of a few kilometres radius with the temple at the centre was engulfed in the shadow of night, and in the midst of it all with Leonora and Tena in tow, I walked off the balcony into the air.
Normally doing this would send me tumbling to the ground, but right now because there was a staircase of black smoke that Tena created, I slowly went down the stairs.

Because my foothold was fluffy and unreliable, even if I knew that I wasn't going to fall, scary things were still scary.

Inside, my heart was beating faster than it ever had since I was born.
If possible, Leonora, Tena, either was fine, so I'd have preferred to have held someone's hand, but that wasn't possible in this situation.

The stairs continued all the way to the ground, but I stopped at a landing situated halfway down, and once again overlooked the surface.
In my vision, the various soldiers and cultists were all looking up at me without exception.
Now then, it's time for the finishing touches.

I quietly closed my eyes, and began moulding my mana.
Let's use all of the mana that I've preserved by even asking Leonora and Tena to set the stage, and shoot it into the sky as one big, flashy firework.
I'll have them think that there's a massive difference in power, and make sure they never dream of attacking me again.
My eyes flashed open, and my chant――――

…*
…*
…*
――――Wha-, huh? The Forteran Army isn't even here. Where'd they go?

…*
…*
…*
With the stage missing the people I was supposed to perform to, unsure of what to do, I froze up.

"Um, Anri-sama? It seems that things have already ended."

"If you're looking for the Forterans, they ran away right after they saw you, you know?"

What did you say?
Wai-, then what do I do about all this mana I've moulded?
I ignored stuff like the maximum limit, so it's about to explode, you know?

"Come now, how long are you going to stand there? Let's return already."

Whatever, gunna fire it.
It was supposed to be a harmless firework, but because I stopped the chant it's turned turned into just your normal attack magic, but it should be fine as long as I fire it somewhere without towns and stuff.

"Wha-!? What do you intend to do!?"

Sorry, it can't be stopped now.

"I-, Idiot! STOOOOOOOOOP———!!!"

(¯―¯-¯―¯)
Chudooon.
(eyes closed, facing up to the sky)
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…*
『Candidate "Anri" has exceeded the required faith and fear levels.』
『Race has been changed from "Human Race" to "Divine Race".』
『Job has been changed from "Mage" to "Administrator".』
『Title has upgraded from "Child of the Evil God" to "Evil God of Fearful Trembling".』
『Gained title "Third Administrator".』
『Gained skill "Administration".』

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Huh?

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Why did things turn out like this?

No, I mean, it's my fault for acting without thinking so it's nothing except reaping what I sow, but even so, who could have predicted that something like this would happen? It might be pointless to say anything after all this time, but the reflection that I'm doing is even deeper than the ocean.
I'm reflecting, so──

"Can't you forgive me already?"

"No. Stay in seiza."

──You're heartless.

..*
After I interrupted the showdown between the soldiers and cultists with my once in a lifetime farce, despite feeling shocked at the sudden 『voice』, I somehow managed to keep a hold of myself and returned to the dungeon, but what awaited me was punishment from the furious Leonora.
Overwhelmed by her threatening attitude, and spent the last few hours in seiza, without even being allowed food or the bathroom. But the fact that for some reason I'm not getting hungry, and that I'm fine without going to the bathroom even once, is a mystery.

Incidentally, the reason that I was being punished like this by Leonora who shouldn't have even known what seiza was, is because it was Tena's suggestion. Tena… you definitely held a grudge over that. And that being the case, just imagining what awaits me after this is enough to send a cold sweat down my spine.
Although I'm a Japanese person who's used to seiza, as you'd expect, after bearing with this for hours I've already lost the feeling in my legs, and just trying to move a little sends prickles throughout my body.
If I get poked in this state… **-tremble tremble-**
..*
Also, regarding Leonora's anger, becoming an Evil God was… not why she was mad, and it was instead because I fired the gathered mana in a random direction.
At first I had planned on just using a harmless and flashy spell to threaten the soldiers, but I ended up losing focus due to the soldiers that had run away before I knew it, and having lost my timing, the mana that had gone beyond the limit was on the verge of going out of control.
Since I couldn't hold it back properly, I had no choice but to fire it, but there'd be damage if anything was hit by that no-longer-harmless mana, and so with at least that much reasoning left, I fired it into a direction with no towns.

..*
And well, of course there were no towns. Because it was in the direction of the "Demon Race Territory".

..*
Having realised what I'd done, Leonora began using magic to check with the Demon Race Territory and how much damage was done, while beginning to lecture me at the same time. She really didn't need to do such a good job of multitasking. I wish she would just focus on confirming the damage.

"Are you listening, Anri!?"

"I'm listening."

I was thinking about something else, but at the very least, it did enter my ear.

While Leonora's lecturing was entering my left ear, and exiting my right, I stealthily chanted "status" under my breath.

Name: Anri
Race: Divine Race [New]
Sex: Female
Age: 17
Job: Administrator [New]
Level: 1
Title: Evil God of Fearful Trembling [New], Dungeon Master, Third Administrator [New]
Mana: 27193018
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.9)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.9)
– Item Box (Lv.9)
– Dungeon Create (Lv.7)
– Administrator (Lv.5) [New]
Equipment:
– Tantou of the Wicked Demon
– Black Clothes of the Evil God
– Babydoll of Depravity
– Scanties of the Succubus
– Pumps of Darkness
Miko:
– Tena

…*
Uwahh… Um~mm, uwahh…
It's no good. I can't find the words.
Just why have things turned out like this?
I knew it when I heard the 『voice』, but seeing it again is rough in various ways.

..*

<Evil God of Fearful Trembles>
The Evil God who governs the Fear authority.

<Third Administrator>
The one who takes the third seat of the administrators of the world.

<Administration>
The basic skill of an Administrator.
Manages the laws and environment of the world.
Level defines the reaches of one's jurisdiction.
Lv.5 is the level where one's jurisdiction encompasses everything except the World System and the authorities held by the other administrators.

..*
If I'm the third seat, then that means there are another 2 people (2 gods?), so if the legends that Leonora told me were correct, then they should be the God of Light and God of Darkness.
By 'the fundamentals of the World system', could they be talking about the power of the Creator God that was tasked with maintaining the world?
Thinking about it, these statuses and titles, skills, and the abilities of the dungeon are probably part of this system.
Even after being turned into a god, I'm not exempt from its management after all, so I can't think of what else this could be.

…*
Name: Tena
Race: Apostle Race
Sex: Female
Age: 14
Job: Miko [New]
Level: 1
Title: Anri's Miko
Mana: 187530
Skills:
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
Equipment:
– Miko Outfit of the Evil God

…*
I even smuggled Tena out of the realm of humans with me. Sorry.
As a bonus, she was released from slavery and became my miko.

…*
『…And that ends my report.』

“I see. Got it. If anything happens, contact me.”

『Understood.』

It seems that Leonora knows how the Demon Race Territory is now.
When I looked at her pleadingly, she averted her eyes whilst telling me what happened.

“Fortunately, nobody was harmed.”

Thank goodness. In my mind, I let out a sigh of relief.
I wasn’t seriously listening to her lecture, but that was because I couldn’t concentrate from the worry. I mean, even like this, I actually did worry. If somebody was hurt because of something stupid like that, I wouldn’t be able to apologise enough.

“However, apparently one mountain was half-destroyed.”

Are you serious? Certainly, by the time it was about to explode, there was a terrifying amount of mana packed in there, but to think that it was enough to smash a mountain.
But well, I guess that’s fine, as long as nobody was hurt. In the worst case, I could probably fix it with the skill I was granted after all.

While thinking about this, a shadow fell over me. Wondering what was up, I looked upwards and found that Leonora was standing in front of me with her head hanging. I couldn’t see her eyes because of her silver hair, but I could see that her mouth was clenched and twitching.
The atmosphere feels kinda dangerous.

“…It seems that you haven’t been listening to me, huh?”

“I *was* listening.”
“Then try repeating it back to me.”

“……”

…I’m sorry.

“Tena. It looks like Anri wants a foot massage.”

“Understood, Leonora-san! Help out too, Lili.”

“Mn.”

I’m seriously sorry!?
Wha-, wait. That’ll be seriously bad right now.
Don’t wriggle your fingers as you sidle up to me!
Pikyaaaaaaaa————!!!

…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
Tena was laughing with a brighter expression than I’d ever seen.

…*
Lili who was playing together with Tena, as well as Leonora who should have been angry, seemed to be having fun as well.

..*

Even though I became something like an Evil God, they didn’t treat me any different.

..*

It's a scene where I have no dignity at all, but I think that this is really happiness.

..*
Although I was supposed to be able to live an average lifestyle, I ended up as average with Evil Gods as my standard, and in the end I even became a real Evil God, but,

…*
if I can be with these girls, then I'm sure things will be fun.

..*
I'm just a novice Evil God, but in order to continue laughing with these girls, I'll at least give it my all to become an average one.

…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
…*
"How does this spot feel, Anri-sama?"

"Tingly."

"Alright, time for me to "help out" too, Anri."

Really, just forgive me already…

Thank you very much for reading.
Now that Anri-san has become an Evil God, Evil God Average 【First Half – Book of Evil】 has finished.
Also, after this I will be writing 【Book of Evil – Side Stories】 where the events up until now will be told from other points of views.
The reason is because when writing in 1st person, there are just things that

Anri-san can't see, and so it wasn't depicted enough.
Where those guys went, what those guys were thinking at the time, things that weren't clear in the main story will come to light, maybe.

And after that, we'll be jumping into the second half, the 【Book of God】.

"entering my left ear, and exiting my right"
Actually the other way around, but sounds weird in English.

Evil God Average

【Book of Evil – Side Stories】

Side Story 01 – A Certain Innkeeper's Reception

The side stories will primarily be from the perspective of other characters, and unlike the main story, the tone will be more serious and more horrific. However, having already read the main story and knowing full well how things are actually progressing, I think that the readers will instead read the stories with a grin and find them fluffy instead.
…I can't imagine that there are any people out there with weird reading habits like reading the side stories before the main story, but if you do exist, you were beyond my expectations, so please go ahead with this in mind.

There will be 11 side stories in total, and the length of each one varies.
Let's start with a bit of a jab.

"Oh, a guest? Welcome, this is an inn."

Around the time when the sun was about to set, hearing the sound of the door opening, I turned and greeted the customer. They looked suspicious; clad from head to toe in a black robe, but having worked in an inn for many years and having seen countless customers before, I could immediately tell from her figure that she was a young girl and so I wasn't particularly suspicious of her. If a young girl walks around with her face showing she'll meet a lot of trouble after all, so it's natural to protect herself.
Now then, for some reason it feels a bit colder in here but… Well, I'm sure it's just my imagination.

"How much is one night?"

"One night is 1 silver, breakfast is 5 coppers, dinner is 10 coppers, and a tub of hot water is 5 coppers."

It’s a little more expensive than other inns, but I think our rooms and food make up for it. We aren’t connected to a tavern so it isn’t noisy, and there aren’t any rough customers either, after all.

“Five nights, with the food and water too please.”

With those words, I was handed some silver coins. One, two, three… Mn, there are certainly 6 here. Most customers pay by the night, but she seems to be quite used to spending money. I hadn’t even told her how much it was yet, and she’d already calculated it herself after all. She must be the daughter of some major merchant, right?
I don’t think it’s the case, but it couldn’t be that she’s a noble, right? The robe she’s wearing is quite well made, though. No matter how much better our inn might be compared to the others, this isn’t a place that a noble would stay.

“Got it, your room is on the second floor, the final door on the right. This is the key. Do you want to eat straight away?”

“Yes, if that’s possible.”

“Right away. I’ll prepare it now so wait in whichever seat you’d like.”

After handing her a key attached to a wooden plate, I went to the kitchen to tell the innmaster to prepare a person’s share of dinner.

..*
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

..*
Because the girl I mentioned didn’t seem to be a very talkative person, we never even chatted so I didn’t know her name. Seeing as she always keeps her robe on whether she’s going out or eating dinner in her room, I’m sure she has some circumstances. I’d be lying if I said that I wasn’t interested, but it isn’t good to pry into the business of the customers after all, so I’m not going to ask.
But still, although she told me not to clean the room or change the bed

sheets while she was staying there, she isn't doing anything weird in there, is she? I'm a little worried.

Eating breakfast, going out, and then returning at night. The girl continued to repeat this, but after a few days, there was a time when she came back earlier than usual. Although she was silent, she would at least reply when you called out "Welcome back", but that day for some reason as soon as she entered the inn, she immediately headed for the stairs. Wondering what was wrong, I looked towards her, and through the gap in her robe, I saw her face for the first time――――

..*
..*
..*
――――――!? W-, What the heck was that!?
Her face was more beautiful than expected, but more importantly what was with those eyes!?
Anger, hatred, disgust, disdain, bloodthirst, resentment, anguish, grief, despair; those black eyes were filled with every negative emotion imaginable. In my years working here I've seen the eyes of all sorts of customers, but this was the first time in my life that I'd seen eyes like *those*. No, those aren't eyes that a human would make. They're the eyes of something much more sinister and terrifying. The moment I saw them, it was like my heart was in a vice-grip. Aahh, how terrifying…
..*
Aahh, just what kind of customer are we hosting.
If possible I'd like them to leave right this instant, but they've already paid for two more nights. If I could return that money then I would do so this instant, but if it flew into a rage and attacked…
There's just two days left. Just two more days. It's been fine so far, so it should be fine for two more days. That's right, isn't it?

..*
..*
After that one day that was different, the *thing that looked like a girl*went back to normal. Fortunately it seems that she didn't realise I had seen her face.
I was so afraid that I almost couldn't do it, but so that it didn't show its true

colours, I had to talk to it like normal, after all. If it knew that I had suspected its true form, I can't even imagine what it'd do to me. Please deliver me from evil.
And like that, I somehow managed to pass the two days.

..*
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

..*
Aahh, it's finally gone…

That *thing that looked like a girl* was talking about extending its stay, so after pleading with it, I somehow got it to accept my refusal. To be honest, the whole time I was afraid running a cold sweat from worry of being attacked, but it seemed to have sensed something because it obediently left. Completely exhausted, I collapsed backwards into a chair. There's no doubt that these last two days have taken three years off of my lifespan.
I took a rest on the chair for a little while, but pulling myself together, I decided to go clean the room. If possible, I want a decent customer next.

..*
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..*
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..*
Wai-, what *is* this!? What's this black canopy bed!?

Side story 02 – A Certain Sister's Terror

"Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama is a great personage who created humankind."

..*
I was standing at the back of the chapel behind the seats, as part of mass. Beyond the seats next to the statue of Sacred Goddess-sama was Reverend-sama, who was in the middle of preaching to the people. Right now he was preaching about the reason why we should be thankful to Sacred Goddess-sama, you see.
When Reverend-sama preaches, his voice resounds through the quiet chapel, and it feels like your soul is being cleansed. That's why I loved mass.

..*
"Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama is always watching over us."

..*
Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama is the esteemed god that created our world, and is a kind and merciful personage who protects we humans from the Evil God that tries to destroy the world.
The Church of Sacred Light sings praise of Her exploits, and exist to convey this to the people. Of course, we do not only teach others, but in accordance to Her will, we are a wonderful organisation that also extends our hands to the needy through food, establishes orphanages, mediates for warring nations, and tries our very best for the sake of peace for humankind.
My family was poor, and so we struggled to feed ourselves each day, but the Church of Sacred Light saved us. Because I wanted to save somebody else, the same way that I was saved, I joined the Church as a nun.

..*
"Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama loves we humans, and protects us from evil."

..*

Although the church in Riemel is not very large, as a town close to the Demon Territory, we're seen as the last stronghold against the demons. Because of that, apparently an archbishop even came all the way here when this church was being built, and along with a number of people, they laid down a complicated barrier for us. Even a normal church wards off evil through the power of Her blessing, but this church is protected with a particularly strong power. Even if by some chance our town was in danger due to an invasion from the Demon Territory, this church wouldn't be so easily invaded. When Reverend-sama told me this, I felt incredibly reassured.

..*
"Please thank Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama for her compassion, and send her your prayers."

..*
With Reverend-sama's words, the people all brought their hands together in prayer. Still standing there, I was about to close my eyes and pray with them――――

..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
――――When at that moment, a **-bang-** resounded within the chapel as it shook.
No, it wasn't the building or the floor that shook. With a sound, it was the space itself that shook. A clamour spread through the people due to the sudden shock.

"Everybody, please calm down!"

Reverend-sama tried to stop everybody, but he couldn't get them to calm down. I didn't understand what happened, but I decided to follow his example and decided to try and calm everybody down.
However, at that moment, I noticed something behind me and so I turned around. And when I did, an abnormal scene unfolded before me.

The church is always open so that anybody can enter at any time, and the door is left open even during mass. Because of that, because I was standing at the back of the chapel, when I turned around I could see what was happening beyond the door. It was the scenery outside that was abnormal; of all things, the scenery was cracked. Beyond the crack was your everyday Riemel, but *because* that townscape was the same as ever, it made the crack ever more strange.
I was dumbfounded by the scene's sudden change to another realm, but before long, it became clear to me that there was a crack in something transparent that covered the church. Perhaps because they noticed my behaviour, Reverend-sama included, everybody in the church turned their eyes outside.
Something covering the church?
It couldn't be the protective barrier that Reverend-sama spoke of, could it?
…No, but in that case, why was it cracked!?

..*
..*
My eyes were held captive by the crack in space, but eventually I noticed that beyond it was somebody standing there in a black robe. The crack coincidentally covered their face, but they seemed to be a girl in her teens. The girl was standing right in front of the crack. I was about to call out in warning, "It's dangerous there, please stay away!", but before I had the chance to, the girl raised her right hand and softly touched the crack before my eyes.

It was the next instant. That crack spread out all at once, until I could see nothing but, and with a **-pan-** sound, *'something'* immediately shattered and vanished.
..*
..*
Eh-?
I-, It can't be… The protective barrier that the archbishop set was-!?
Although I was dumb from disbelief, I could certainly feel it disappearing; the aura of sacredness that had been always present.

..*
..*

And because the crack was now gone, the face under the robe was now visible to me.
The moment our eyes met, it felt like I was being strangled by some feeling of oppression, and I found myself unable to breathe.
It wasn't only me. Reverend-sama and everybody else behind me stood frozen, unable to even speak.
The t*hing that looked like a girl* glared at everybody in the church in silence――――
..*
..*
..*
..*
――――Before curving its lips into a sneer, and turning to leave after muttering something.

..*
..*
..*
..*
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..*
..*
Because the *thing that looked like a girl* had walked away, we could finally breathe again. The emotional strain on everybody was huge, and everybody sank to the ground in exhaustion.
Because there was no way to continue the mass like this, we stopped it and instead immediately made warm soup for everyone. Honestly speaking, I felt like I was going to collapse myself, but I needed to prepare the soup.
..*
..*
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..*

Although its face was beautiful, there's no doubt that it was a retainer of the Evil God.
…No, since it so easily destroyed the archbishop's barrier, I'm sure that it was the Evil God itself.
That it left after doing nothing but destroying the barrier was surely a malicious announcement that it could attack at any time. The Evil God's ghastly smile had told me so.
I couldn't hear what the Evil God muttered at the end, but it was surely some horrifying curse.
Just what will happen to this world, and what will happen to *us*?
..*
Aahh, Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama.
Please deliver us from evil.

TL: I actually had a lot of trouble with this. I really hated writing 'Reverend-sama', but calling him 'the reverend' doesn't give the sense that she knows him well (as a member of the same church). At the same time, no name was given, so I couldn't replace 'shimpu-sama' with 'Father ____' either. In the end I resorted to the awkward sounding 'Reverend-sama', but I still feel it was the best choice, so please forgive me.

Side story 03 – A Certain Adventurer's Disaster

After receiving our rewards for reporting the completion of our quest, we sat 'round a table in the guild to take a break.
The quest we turned in was the subjugation mission of forest wolves… Was a pretty difficult job for us. Forest wolves are pack monsters that live in the forest, but recently they've been growing too large in number and have been attacking merchants that use the forest roads. That's why the lord of this area sent out a request for their subjugation.
Each forest wolf ain't so strong by themselves, but they always move in a pack and attack after surrounding the enemy, so they're a pretty annoying foe. In the forest your vision is limited, so forest wolves are a monster you need to take care with, but for some reason they appeared close to the entrance to the forest yesterday, so it was easy to hunt them. Seems that something scared them. I was worrying about it, but I still have no idea.

"Still, things were easier than expected this time, ey?"

"Well yeah, the wolves were at the entrance to the forest for some reason. What's more there wasn't any teamwork at all."

Apparently my companions were thinking about the same thing. I decided to join in.

"Didn't feel like they were hunting for prey. Speaking of which, didn't they look scared of something?"

They nodded in agreement.

"Yeah, I got that feeling too. Could it be that they were running from some strong monster that took up residence in the forest or something?"

"Hell if I know. But it sounds possible."

Basically the only times that monsters migrate are when there are too many of them, too little prey, or when there's a strong monster that moved into their territory. Since they moved so suddenly this time, and they looked scared too, the chance that it's the latter is pretty high.

"Can't be that a dragon or something moved into the forest, right?"

"Haha, pretty sure that ain't happening."

I've been an adventurer for pretty bloody long, but I ain't never seen a dragon. Heard that they exist deep into the Demon Territory though.

"Well at any rate, it'd probably be better to be careful if we head into the forest again for a quest."

"Yeah. Ain't nothing matter more than your life."

Once you're dead, you're dead.
An adventurer is a job where your life completely hangs on your skills and yourself, but even so you get novice brats that dream of being heroes and get themselves killed trying to do the unreasonable. Veterans like us try to teach them what the world is like whenever we can, but people like that are endless.
Right, just like that kid over-… Hey.

..*
..*
"I'll be transcribing what's written on the car——"

"Oi, oi, this little girl wants to become an adventurer? It's the end of the bloody world."

When I went to have a look, I found someone hidden from head to toe in a black robe, applying at the counter to be an adventurer. But even under that robe I could tell at a glance that they were a dainty, green-arsed brat, and what's more a woman. This brat of a girl is going to be an adventurer without even forming a party? It's bloody suicide! If I leave her alone, in two

or three days she's just gunna be a 'seed-bed' for a goblin nest.
Before I knew it, I'd left my seat and cut into the conversation.

"Oi, oi, Gartz. You're seriously picking a fight with another newbie?"

"Doing this everyyy singleee time. You sure don't get bored, huh."

Can't be helped that my companions are all astonished that I'm doing this again, but I'm not gunna sleep well knowing that brats are getting themselves killed left and right. It's for their sake as well that I grill them a little and have them work underneath us.
The lass might've been afraid of me or something, cause she just stood there without saying anything.
Looking at her again, she sure is bloody tiny.

"Oi, how 'bout saying something. Don't just stand there wordlessly forever with your face hidden."

Saying that, I pulled off the little girl's hood.

..*
..*
————!?

The moment I saw her face, I spontaneously stiffened.
The moment our eyes met, I thought I was gunna die.
Her eyes were so dark and stagnant that I'm pretty sure even demons don't have such horrible eyes.
The next moment, just as I seemed to feel a prickling pain on my arm, the girl was fucking holding a sinister black tantou.

Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit! She's gunna kill me!

"HII-!?"

I reflexively let out a pathetic cry as I fell on my arse.
Before I knew it, the thing in front of my wasn't a human woman anymore.

It was a monster spurting out some black sludge from its whole body.
I backed away, trying to put even a little distance between us.

“＄％、＆＄＆％’＃!”

And when I did, I heard a somewhat hard to comprehend cry.
Turning around, I found that the same fucking monsters were reaching out their tentacles to me.

“!? UOOOOAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH————!!!”

“@＃、＊?＃＄＆＄＆％!”

I tried my best to hit the thing, but there didn’t seem to be any effect.
Far from it, before I knew it all the monsters had fucking surrounded me and were charging in at me at once.

I somehow managed to shake them off and got myself outside, but
even *there* the place was filled with the things.
“What the fuck is going on with this town!?”

I don’t even know who I was screaming at, but I started to run to escape this town of monsters.

..*
..*
..*
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

..*
When I came to, I was laying on the ground.
Holding my hand against my painfully throbbing head, I got up and looked around. Apparently I was in a field outside of Riemel. Although I was close to town, it wasn’t as though there weren’t any monsters. The fact that I didn’t get eaten while lying around here was just good luck.

Anyway, it wasn't like I could get anything done here, so I decided to head back to town. I get the feeling that I've forgotten something incredible, but I can't remember what it was.

..*
..*
It was right afterwards that I was told that I had hit the guards and forcefully broken out of town, and starting from the entrance to town, I was stuck with being accused by a bunch of people about stuff I have no recollection about.

..*
Just what the fuck have I been doing!?

He seems to be a ruffian, but is actually a good person.

Side story 04 – A Certain Slave's Salvation

Is in a sense one of the few (almost) completely serious chapters in this story.
It's a little depressing, so readers who are bad with it are advised to skip this chapter and read only the final three lines.

In the dark dungeon filled with despair, she was the only one who extended her hand to me.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

This year was a bad harvest.
The crops in the field had shrivelled, and unable to even provide a good meal, they had no worth on the market. We had just a little bit saved up, but even so it wasn't enough for a family of five to pass the winter with.
When the slave merchants came to the village in their carriages, there was already nothing else we could do.

I have a father, a mother, a brother two years older than me, and a little brother one year younger. Because they needed the manpower of the boys, it was inevitable that I was the one sold.

Although I say 'sold', that wasn't exactly correct. Strictly speaking, we entered a contract of debt with the slave merchants.
The slave merchants gave my father a loan, and I became the security. If my father couldn't pay back the money, I would be sold as a slave. But from the beginning, we all knew that there was no chance of paying them back. It

seems the slave merchants intended this as well because they told us that if we gave up on paying them back right away, they would give a better price.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
While averting his eyes from me, father told the slave merchants right there that he couldn't pay them back.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

I had hoped that something fortunate would happen after this misfortune, but it seems that Sacred Goddess-sama wouldn't permit such naivety. Misfortune followed the misfortune, and on the carriage back to town, I contracted a fatal illness. It was tough to even raise my body, and my chest throbbed with pain. There were times when I even coughed blood.
There were two other slaves weak from disease, and out of worry of infecting the healthy ones, we were tossed into a heap on the carriage that held the luggage. The chances of being sold were lower because we were going to die, so the food we were given were less than the other slaves, but I couldn't really find the appetite either.

By the time the carriage finally reached Riemel, I was already at death's door.

imouto
In the slave merchant's shop, the three of us were put into the same cell. It was a cell for slaves on the verge of death like us. Because it was a waste of money, we weren't even allowed to wear clothing, and everybody just sat around the way they wanted. Even when we were first put into the cell, only half of the slaves in there made any response, and when I saw these people whose hearts had died in despair first, I felt heart chill over.
That was my future, and it wasn't a far off one.

imouto
I was told by the slave merchants that slaves on the verge of death were sold off to be killed.
Human shields against monsters for adventurers or bodyguards, or material for magical experiments. And although they weren't many, there were also those who simply wanted to satisfy their desires, and bought cheap slaves to use to death.
If we were sold, we would be killed. On the other hand, if we stayed unsold like this, then before long as well…

imouto
A body wracked with pain being corroded by disease, and a heart that was corroded by despair that went beyond that.
Days where it seemed like my heart would die first passed by.
Customers came in before our cell a number of times, and the number of slaves in the cell decreased.

imouto
imouto
imouto
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

One day, the slave merchants brought another customer.
Still leaning against the wall, I hazily had a look.
Most of the customers so far had been male, but although I couldn't see their face under the black robe, this time they were probably a woman…
And what's more, somebody who only seemed a little older than me.
After the slave merchant said something to them, that woman stepped forward and took off her hood herself.
The moment I saw her eyes, my heart that should have been on the verge of death, the verge of stopping, was for some reason trembling.

"This girl is?"

"Her name is Tena, and she's 14 years old. She was born in a village a little distance from Riemel, and is a debt slave, but on the way here she was attacked by a fatal disease and she probably only has a month left to live."

I unconsciously flinched at the slave merchant's words. Although I knew that I didn't have long to live, hearing somebody else talk concretely about how much longer I had made the fear of death well up in me.

imouto
I don't… want to die…

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
"If it's me, then I might be able to save her."

… … … … … …Eh?
It took a little while until I properly understood what the woman had said.
Save me? Is she going to save me?
I looked at the black eyes that were staring in my direction, but they were serious and didn't look like she was lying. And for some reason, when I look her in the eyes, my heart can't stay calm.

"I don't have any proof, but if you'll believe and accept me, then take this hand."

With her words, the woman stretched her arm into the cage and held her hand out to me.
I looked at her face and her outstretched hand, dumbfounded, but I decided to trust in my agitated heart and took her hand. It was a fact that I wouldn't be saved at this rate anyway, so I decided to follow my heart.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
They cleaned my body, and I was able to wear clothes for the first time in a while. I was in chaos from all the things that had happened while I was in a daze, but when they put on the collar for slaves when they dressed me, I was finally conscious of the fact that I was being sold. Because I was too

weak to even walk, one of the servant men carried me into the shop and laid me on the floor.

“Please touch her collar with your hand.”

Doing as she was asked, the woman that bought me stretched her hand out to the collar on my neck. After touching it for a while, the collar shone with light, and I heard a voice from somewhere.

『You have been enslaved to Anri.』

It was in that instant, that the woman──Anri-sama, became my master.

imouto
“With this, she’s become your slave, and has absolute obedience to you. Because she can’t walk, would you like us to call you a carriage?”

“I don’t need it; I’ll carry her.”

I was slow to react to the surprising words, so by the time I had realised, Anri-sama had already picked me up and placed me on her back.
In what kind of world does a master carry their servant? I tried moving my sluggish body to try and get down, but she was holding onto me tightly so I couldn’t. Because she didn’t seem to have any intention of letting me down, I stopped struggling.
But still, although she was a woman and so she wasn’t particularly big, Anri-sama was surprisingly strong. No matter how light I had become from growing thin, I shouldn’t have been so light that a woman could easily carry me.

But still, just why did she buy me? There aren’t many uses for a slave on the verge of death, but no matter what, I couldn’t imagine her to be a person who wanted a slave for those purposes.

imouto
Just as I was wondering where she was carrying me to, Anri-sama entered an alleyway and placed me down in an empty plaza. Without knowing why I had been brought here, I just looked up at Anri-sama dumbly.

“You swore to believe in me.”

“…Yes.”

The first words I had spoken in a while came out hoarsely, but it seems Anri-sama somehow understood me. She pointed her finger at my forehead.

“Divine Enchantment.”

『You have received divine protection from Anri.』

Together with the voice from before, I was engulfed in something black. It wasn’t uncomfortable or painful, but I could definitely feel something inside me changing.
When the blackness disappeared, my appearance had completely changed. The clothing that had just been a hole in a cloth was now a high-class fabric decorated with ornaments, and the arms and legs that should’ve been nothing more than skin and bones had the meat return to them.

“Eh-… Ah-…”

With no idea of what had happened, I was looking at my limbs and clothes when I suddenly noticed that the plain that had been always been plaguing me was gone. It was like the pain that wracked me even just breathing had all been a lie.
The comment that Anri-sama had made in the dungeon, “I might be able to save her” came to mind.
It wasn’t a lie… She saved me…

“Thank you very much! Thank you very much!”

While crying and feeling relief at having my life saved, I held Anri-sama’s hand as I continued to thank her.

◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

After crying for a while, I paled at what I had just done. As a slave, I had clung to my master as I bawled. I might be sold out of anger for my

disrespect. I don't want to think that Anri-sama who saved my life would do something like that, but it isn't anything strange to be sold because you angered your master.

"Stand.""

"Y-, Yes-!"

Since I'd already done something terribly rude, I immediately obeyed and jumped straight up, so that I wouldn't ruin her mood any further. Speaking of which, how long has it been since I was able to stand on my own? While thinking about stupid things like that, I waited in fear for her probable declaration of my abandonment.

"I want you to live at my home and do the housework and shopping."

"…Eh?"

There were two things I couldn't comprehend about her response, so I accidentally let out my voice. The first was that instead of being scolded like I thought, she went and left a task for me. The second was the contents of the task.

"Dissatisfied?"

"T-, That would be absurd! Only, umm… is just that much fine?"

Because she seemed to condemn me, I shook my head in a fluster, but I couldn't help but voice my misgivings about the task. People go out of their way to buy slaves because the jobs that are need to be done are terribly difficult, or things that normal people didn't want to do. But despite that, Anri-sama just asked me to do jobs that normal servants did, and weren't at all the jobs that were left to a slave.

"Just that is fine. But, I live quite far from town, so shopping is quite a task."

"Understood."

Far from town?
I wonder where Anri-sama lives.

After that, Anri-sama kindly bought me shoes and underwear. Both were of a quality that you wouldn't give to a slave, so in shock I tried to refuse, but because she told me that I definitely had to wear underwear, I did as I was told and gratefully accepted them.

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Anri-sama.
In the dark dungeon filled with despair, she was the only one who extended her hand to me.
I still don't know what on earth this person wants from me, but she saved me from certain death, so I'll follow her to the ends of the world.

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"Wai-, isn't this place a dungeon!?"

"Well yeah, I'm a dungeon master."

"————————!?"

Side story 05 – A Certain Guildmaster's Melancholy

"Abnormalities in the Beginners Dungeon, you say?"

"Yes. There was a report from Lufree-san."

When I skimmed through the report that made it to my office, I couldn't help but tilt my head in wonder.
The Beginners Dungeon is a dungeon closeby to Riemel, and although the dungeon master was already subjugated. Because of that, the dungeon is now dormant, but not dead.
It was originally a shallow dungeon with only 3 floors after all, making the monsters all weak. Because of that it was left under the jurisdiction of the Riemel Branch of the Adventurers Guild as a training ground for beginners. Although dungeons without a dungeon master won't grow anymore, as long as the dungeon core isn't broken, it'll continue to produce monsters and set traps, so it was a pretty effective training ground.

"The atmosphere and interior of the dungeon have changed, and the spawned monsters are stronger?"

In the past, the only monsters that spawned in the Beginners Dungeon were slimes and kobolds. But from what I can tell having read Lufree's report, wraiths and black steel golems appear now. Lufree was close to becoming one of the leading adventurers, but he reported that he couldn't match them at all.

"The revival of the dungeon master… No, it would probably be better to see this as the birth of a new dungeon master, wouldn't it."

Dungeon masters are born when the naturally occuring dungeon cores form a contract with a monster, animal, or perhaps human or demon. Dungeon masters steal the mana of prey killed within the dungeon, and use that

mana to develop the dungeon. If left alone, they can grow infinitely. Because of that, dungeon masters become subjugation targets. Left alone it's quite likely that they could swallow a town or city before you know it, after all. The dungeon core in the Beginners Dungeon was presumably in good shape, so it's probable that somebody or something came into contact with it and became the new dungeon master.
But what worries me is the fact that the spawned monsters are powerful, and that there's an ominous aura coming from within the dungeon. Both of these factors point to the new dungeon master being a considerably powerful being. A powerful monster, or… a demon.

"Call in Vaif's team."

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"Pretty rare that you expressly call us over, ey, Guild Master?"

The next day, I went to meet the 4-man adventurer party that had responded to the request. They're the top rankers of Riemel Town, and at present, they're the highest ranking party that I can mobilise.

"I want to task you all with the investigation of this incident."

After saying that, I handed Vaif the report from Lufree. After Vaif had a look through it, it was passed around the party.

"An abnormality in that Beginners Dungeon, …huh? And why did you go out of your way to call *us*?"
"Call it my intuition. I have a feeling that things will get complicated."

"My, my. Your intuition's always been pretty good, after all."

Investigating the level of risk this "Former" Beginners Dungeon posed was of utmost priority. If Lufree who is basically a core adventurer wasn't even a match for them, then unless it's a fairly powerful team they won't be able

to determine how dangerous the dungeon is. That's why I couldn't be stingy.

"Please investigate with attention to details."

"Understood. Leave it to us."

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"So, this report was the result?"

"…It shames me to say it."

After reading the report from Vaif, I spoke to Vaif who was in front of me. Unlike the time when I dispatched him, his party members weren't present. It seems they were quite depressed with the results of their investigation.

"I wasn't particularly criticising you. You fulfilled the objective of determining the dungeon's risk, so it doesn't matter that you failed the request."

Only, the results are much harsher than expected. Not even in my dreams did I imagine that Riemel Branch's top rankers would be beaten on the 2nd floor.
Powerful monsters, difficult to deal with traps, and what's more…

"Miasma?"

"Yeah, a troublesome one that affects the mind. It's impossible to go deeper without countermeasures."

Miasma is an aura released by evil beings, and while some corrode the body like poisons, some are like this one and cause negative influences on the spirit. It's known that when it comes to dungeons, the nature of the dungeon master will be spread throughout the dungeon. In general, dungeons with miasma are home to high-ranked dungeon masters, and this

is particularly true for dungeons with miasma that affects the mind.
Clerics with lots of practice can form barriers, and items consecrated by the Church of Sacred Light can protect against the miasma to an extent, but it doesn't change the fact that it's a troublesome problem.

"But still, you did quite well in surviving a wipeout in the dungeon."

"Well yeah, normally you'd be eaten by monsters and die on the spot after all. I *did* mention that in the report just in case, but…"
Apparently, after they fainted, only their items and weapons were taken, and before they knew it, they had been tossed into the dungeon entrance.
This report was consistent with the one from Lufree the other day. Honsetly speaking, I don't understand it. I do believe that it's basically settled that there's a new dungeon master in the "Former" Beginners Dungeon, but the purpose of a dungeon should be to kill prey inside and steal their mana. Knocking them out, stealing their weapons and items, and then returning them alive… This is the first case of its kind.

"Well? What are you gunna do?"

Even if we agonise over the dungeon master's plan, it doesn't seem like we'll figure anything out. Just like Vaif said, it would probably be best to think about what we should do next. It's likely that he personally wants to re-challenge the investigation that left him in humiliation though.

"Let's see. I am thinking of spreading news of a request for countermeasures against a new dungeon. The reward should be about 30 gold coins."

"30 gold coins!? …No, certainly that much might be necessary."

Honestly speaking, it's an extravagant sum for the subjugation of a completely new dungeon, but I don't think this is too much. Despite being shocked, Vaif as well immediately agreed. As long as even Vaif's team, top rankers in this branch, had trouble making progress, there isn't any choice except to hope for manpower from elsewhere. With this much money, we can probably expect people from all across the country to challenge this dungeon.

“As long as we’re sending out a request, we need to think of a name for this dungeon, don’t we. It’s already a different dungeon to the Beginners Dungeon. Hmm, how about… “The Wicked Cave of the Robber”?”

“Fits it perfectly.”

In light of the fact that it releases a fiendish miasma, as well as the fact that its purpose can only be assumed to be stealing weapons and items from adventurers, this was the name we gave it.
Now then, while I send out the request, I’d better contact the Adventurers Guilds in other towns as well.
It seems things will get busy from now on.

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That of all things, I would incur the wrath of the Evil God because of that name, was something that I hadn’t even imagined at that time.

Side story 06 – A Certain Mage's Grief

"The Wicked Cave of the Robber?"

"Yes, it was in the Guild announcement. Apparently it's a new dungeon, but the reward for the subjugation of the dungeon master was 30 gold coins."

"Thirty gold coins!?"

While sitting around a table in the inn's tavern, we reported to each other the results of the information gathering when we split up into two groups in town.
A capture request for a new dungeon? But still, for a newly formed dungeon, that's quite a sum attached isn't it. That's probably just how dangerous they think the dungeon might be though.

"Apparently a bunch of parties have already challenged it, but didn't make much progress. Not only are there a bunch of strong monsters wandering about, there's even talk about it being filled with miasma."

"Miasma? It's annoying stuff, but as long as we have Widdi we should manage somehow."

She's young, but Widdi's power as a cleric is greater than the average bishop. On a good day, she can even rival an archbishop, so a barrier put up by her should be able to hold out the miasma.

"Well? What are we gunna do?"

"Hmm. If everyone agrees, I was thinking that we'd challenge it. It's a bit of a detour though."

I thought a little bit about what Arc said. We're the Hero Party, and on our way to the Demon King in the Demon Territory, we just stopped over here in Riemel for a little, so going to capture the dungeon would definitely be

making a detour.
Having said that though, thinking about Arc and Widdi's personalities, they probably won't be able to leave this town alone after all, and in high level dungeons, you can get strong weapons and items as well. What's more, although we're not lacking in travelling money, it definitely never hurts to have more, so the reward is looking pretty good as well.

"Okay. Sounds good."

"I'm in too."

"I agree as well."

After I agreed, Zio and Widdi followed, and with our unanimous decision, we were now headed to challenge the new dungeon.

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I had heard about how difficult the dungeon would be beforehand, but honestly speaking, I didn't think it would be *this* hard. The miasma floating around was thick enough that I'm pretty sure we'd be in trouble without Widdi's barrier, and the monsters prowling about were quite strong as well. On top of that, ever since we decided to take our break after the last barrier renewal, the monsters have been attacking more vigorously than ever, and sapped us of our stamina.
"Huuu, these monster attacks have been pretty crazy, haven't they."

"Isn't it because we badmouthed the dungeon master and angered him?"

I grumbled in complaint while repulsing a monster for the Nth time, and Zio frivolously replied.

"It certainly does feel like they're being sent here on purpose, huh."

"…"

Arc agreed as well, but Widdi alone didn't join in. Far from it, for some reason she was trembling with her head hanging.

"Widdi?"

"Oi, what's wrong?"

"You okay?"

Seeing that something was up, we all called out to her, but Widdi just wouldn't reply. But after a while, she finally gave her response with a bright red face and teary eyes.

"U-, Umm… I-, I need to use the bathroom…"

"…"

"…"

"…"

I chased the men away with an 'ahem'.

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High-ranked adventurers though we may be, we can't beat biology. It's been quite a while since we entered the dungeon, and Widdi was apparently at her limits too. After making sure we were far enough that the men couldn't see, Widdi immediately squatted against the wall. The monsters wouldn't care about our circumstances so there was no way to let Widdi go off on her own, so as a fellow woman, I went with her to stand guard.

It's awkward, but there's really nothing we can do. There aren't any toilets in a dungeon after all, so it can't be helped.

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…Or so I thought, but apparently this dungeon just got weirder and weirder. Once we went down a floor, the very first room had the entrances to a men's and women's toilet. They were even meticulous enough to leave a sign plate.

"Suspicious."

"Def suspicious."

"Pretty suspicious."

"Whyy! Had it been on the last floor then I wouldn't have had to do something so embarrassing…-!"

Widdi was groaning in complaint for a different reason than the rest of us, but thinking about it normally, this is as suspicious as it gets. It's clearly unnatural to have a toilet in a dungeon. The chance of it being a trap are high. It's high, but…

"Arc, could you check to see if it's a trap?"

the truth is, I think I've just about hit my limit as well. If there are no traps, I'd like to use it. The divine protection on Arc's Holy Sword can check for traps, so I had him check for any problems.

"Uu… To think that I'd use the blessing of the Holy Sword to check the safety of a toilet. Sacred Goddess Sophia-sama, please grant me your forgiveness…"

In the end, he apparently didn't find any traps, so I gratefully used it. Widdi was glaring at me hatefully, but I paid it no heed.

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When we reached the 10th floor, we hit a snag in a certain room. In the middle of that room was a large pedestal, and words were carved into it.

“『Thee who wouldst come in challenge before the throne of the undying one, arrange correctly the stars.』 huh? Just what the heck could it mean?”

“There are many undead in this dungeon, so I believe that the “Undying One” refers to the boss of this dungeon.”

Mn, that sounds right. I was thinking what Widdi said.

“I see. Then in other words, if we want to fight the dungeon master, then we have to “arrange correctly the skies”, huh? I wonder what “arrange correctly the skies” means.”

Geez, Arc sure is the same as ever. Even if you say ‘I see’, we still don’t know the *important* part.
“They probably mean the celestial bodies, huh? I think that’s what these marks on the pedestal represent.”

On the pedestal, apart from the words were three square holes, and some kind of marks carved inside them. A mark that was a circle with jagged teeth around them, a mark like a wide arc, and a jagged mark with five points.

“How are we supposed to arrange these marks? …They don’t bloody move.”

“Seems that putting mana into it doesn’t work either, huh.”

Zio stuck his right hand into one of the holes and tried to move it sideways, but it didn’t seem to budge at all. It doesn’t look like something you can solve with brute force. Having said that though, it doesn’t seem to be a magical contraption either.

“Arc-sama, has the guidance of the Holy Sword not given any clues?”

“Sorry, nothing really…”

“N-, No! I apologise for asking too much!”

Widdi had entrusted a gleam of hope with Arc's Holy Sword, but apparently that wasn't working either.
Seeing Arc reply apologetically, Widdi frantically apologised.

"Even the Holy Sword from Sacred Goddess-sama can't do a thing? Seriously? It's a pretty hard question, hey? As someone whose specialty is using my body, this kind of thing is a bit much for me."

"Don't say things like that, and think together with everyone!"

It's a problem with Arc too, but Zio is the type to do things by force without being very good at thinking. Having said that, pushing all the thinking work to Widdi and I would be troubling.

After that, we tried things like cutting at the pedestal with the Holy Sword, or trying to move the pedestal itself, but even after trying various things, we weren't any better off.

"It's not good. I haven't the tiniest idea how to get the dungeon master to come out. I thought this place would be a shallow dungeon, so we didn't prepare enough. It's frustrating, but let's withdraw for now."

"T-, To withdraw right before the dungeon master…-!"

Well, I guess it can't be helped. We've reached a dead end after all, and just like Arc said, it's also a fact that we weren't prepared enough. Nobody imagined that a new dungeon would be this deep, so we only brought basic camping gear. It can't be helped.

We decided to give up and head back for the surface.

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After that we decided to head back for Riemel to gather information, and a certain rumour reached our ears.
It was that the real Evil God was lurking in that dungeon.

“The Evil God? Honestly sounds like a fake, but…”

“But it’s also a fact that it wasn’t your average miasma in that dungeon.”

We realised after checking for ourselves, but the miasma in that dungeon wasn’t something normal. It was at a level where you could believe it if somebody said the Evil God was in there. What’s more, the monsters spawned were quite strong as well.

“What shall we do, Arc-sama?”

“…”

Widdi asked Arc, but he was at a loss for once, and sank into thought for a while.

“Honestly… it pains me to say it, but I don’t think we can beat the Evil God as we are.”

The Evil God is the being that’s said to create the Demon King, so there’s definitely no mistaking that he’s stronger than the Demon King. Right now we don’t know if we can defeat the Demon King, but at the very least, we don’t have much hope in defeating a being called a god.

“That’s true.”

“Yeah, pretty sure that’s too much.”

“It pains me to admit it as a follower of the Church of Sacred Light, but…”

Being a cleric, Widdi was making a bitter expression, but if we failed in vain here and became unable to defeat the Demon King, it would just be putting the cart before the horse. In the end, Arc’s duty as the Hero was just to defeat the Demon King, and we the Hero Party were there to support him in that role.

“For now, we’ll keep that dungeon in mind, and head to the Demon Territory first. If we safely defeat the Demon King, then at that time we’ll come back here and challenge it again.”

We all nodded back at Arc’s strong declaration.

“But still, despite all the work we did, all we got in the end was this weird stone slab? Geez, what a bloody waste of time.”

“Speaking of which, what on earth *are* these things?”
Speaking of which, we certainly did pick up this items on the 10th floor. There isn’t any mana coming from it, and it only looks like a normal stone slab.

“I don’t know either, but it was something found in the dungeon said to house the Evil God. It might actually hold some incredible power. There’s a chance that it’ll become our trump card in the fight against the Demon King.”

“That *would* be nice, but…”
Now then, now that we’re done with our detour, I guess tomorrow we’ll be beginning our journey towards the Demon King Castle.
I guess I’ll pray that we make it safely back to this town again.

Arc held the up Stone Slab of the Moon to the sky.

But nothing happened.

Side Story 07 – A Certain Undying King's Loyalty

It felt as though something was pulling me.
Is this… a summon?

Fumu, it has been a long while since I have been called forth.
As I recall, the last time was by a court magician from somewhere, although he now serves as my retainer.
If chance permits, this time I desire a summoner to be somebody worthy of me.

I am――――a king.
With countless retainers under my management, I am the King of Undead.
The summoner though they may be, a king does not kneel.
If they are an incompetent fool who tries to subordinate me, I shall immediately give them their last breath, and add them to my retainers instead.

With an enormous mana as the compensation, my body was able to materialise.
I see. If they are able to use this much mana without issue, then at the very least they have ability.
And thus, I manifested myself.

What I saw through my empty eye sockets was a room somewhere. Before me was a blue crystal enshrined on a pedestal, and next to it was a human girl clad in blac――――――!?

"……ah……"

As an undead, I no longer possess a heartbeat. However, in that instant, there was no doubt that I had experienced that long-lost sensation of having

my pulse quicken. Even this body that needed not to breath had become speechless due to the shock.

AAH, AAHH, AAAHHH… I *know*.
The overwhelming power in those dark and ominous eyes, and more than anything, that atmosphere.
Although she had taken the form of a human girl, there was no doubt. This personage was, this personage alone was the god that I ought to worship.
The god that I had worshipped back when I was a human, and yet died before witnessing. It was a memory sunk deep into the oblivion of time, and yet, as I now recall, the reason that I gained this undead body was for the sake of my dream of one day gazing upon my god.
"……oh……"

The impatience of trying to find something to say had slipped out of my mouth.

"I'm Anri. I want to leave the defence of this floor to you."

While I was unable to form words, God spoke to me.
Anri-sama! So this was the name of my god!
What's more, to think that she would entrust a mission to me!

"Let's get along."

After saying that, Anri-sama, placed her hand against the blue crystal and teleported me.
Although I was unable to speak a single word in the end, at the very least, I knelt and deeply bowed during the teleportation in order to demonstrate my loyalty.

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The days where I waited for intruders upon the throne that Anri-sama granted me continued on.
This throne was something that Anri-sama had gone out of her way to create for me in the room that I was in charge of. I was in joy, and my loyalty was renewed, but I found myself lacking the chance to demonstrate my

loyalty.
The floor I was entrusted with protection was the 10th floor. Most intruders fell on the 3rd floor, and almost nobody made it this deep.
The other day, a party had finally made it to the 10th floor, but for some reason they retreated before the door to my room. I was only able to sense their presence, and do not know why they retreated, but, hmmm, in that case, could it be that they sensed my presence and avoided battle? It was quite a wise decision, yet, at this rate I will not be granted the chance to demonstrate my loyalty to Anri-sama.

"…So they've come."

However, that changed. The chance I had been craving had finally come by. Although they spent a while doing something or other before the door, in the end the door opened, and an uninvited guest entered. The one who entered was a young girl with silver hair, but having come this far, it was impossible that she was weak. And moreover, this aura… I see. So she was a kin of the Demon King.

"Welcome, my guest. You are the first one to have reached here."

"I see. So you're the No Life King mentioned on the pedestal? It seems that you have what it takes to be arrogant, huh."

Arrogant…? I see, so I was arrogant.
Indeed, before I met Anri-sama, you could say that I was arrogant. I hadn't admitted that there was anybody above me. Of course, I have long since abandoned such thoughts.

"Indeed, the one before you is the one who governs many retainers, the King of the Undead. Even in the face of a Demon King, I have no intention of kneeling."

Indeed; I have sworn loyalty to Anri-sama. I also abandoned the thought of being peerless.
However, even so, I remain the King of the Undead. The only one I will bow to is Anri-sama alone, and though she may have the blood of the Demon King, I will absolutely not yield.

“It seems that you know what I am. I originally planned on just beating you down, but I’ve changed my mind. You can just quit being a dungeon master, and serve I who will one day inherit the throne.”

“I said that I would not kneel. Do not push your luck, lass.”

You shall regret those haughty words.

“Then I’ll make you submit by force!”

“Come. Adding the daughter of a demon king to my retainers would also be amusing!”

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It felt as though something was pulling me.

After I was defeated by the daughter of the Demon King, my body had crumpled, and yet for some reason, although it should have faded, my consciousness remained. And my consciousness was now being drawn somewhere. It was a feeling unlike the summoning from the other day. It was almost as though… Right, almost as though I was being assimilated with something else that was being summoned.

And then I once again materialised.
Like the exact same scene from the other day, I caught sight of the god that I had pledged my loyalty to.
Was this… Had Anri-sama resurrected me? Aahh, what deep compassion she has for somebody who was defeated and unable to fulfil his mission.

“Anri-sama…”

“…?”

I immediately dropped to my knee, and showed my loyalty. In the past I had displayed embarrassing behaviour due to my shock, but because this was my second time, I was able to take action.

Anri-sama seemed to be bewildered by something, but she immediately spoke to me.

“I want to leave the defence of the 10th floor to you.”

“Understood. I shall use my all to defeat the enemy for you.”

I received the same order as previously. I blundered once, but never again.

“Also… just in case, take this.”

With those words, Anri-sama stretched her hand towards me, and touched my forehead.

Side Story 08 – A certain Demon Princess

The large doors opened.
What lay before my eyes was a large room similar to an audience room, and at a place further into it on a platform a step higher than the ground, was a throne.

On the throne sat the one who was likely the ruler of this place; a girl with black hair.
Clad in a black robe, that girl gazed straight at me as I stood by the entrance, and even from a distance, I could clearly feel her gaze.
The moment that our eyes met, the instincts in my body screamed at me to run. Sweat suddenly began to drip, and I could feel myself grow pale. I'm sure that right now I've gone beyond pale, into pure white. My arms and legs began to tremble on their own, and as my teeth chattered, I could hear the sounds making as though it were happening to somebody else. And by the time that I noticed all this, I finally understood what this feeling was.

──Fear. No, since I was feeling this because of an absolutely unopposable being, perhaps I should call it terror and awe.
In the face of this weight of presence that exceeded even my father, His Majesty, I could do nothing but atrophy like a powerless rabbit.

This is bad this is bad this is bad… I've disrespected an unfathomable person.
Moved by some irresponsible rumour, on top of invading their territory, I went and defeated their gate guard, the No Life King. If somebody went and did that at the Demon King Castle, we definitely wouldn't forgive them.
We'd definitely soak them in a bloodbath, and if the enemy was a country, then we'd even be willing to go to war.

…Country?

The moment I noticed this, I was hit by an impact like a strike to the head.
That's right. The situation is already at a point that won't end with just me.

As someone with the blood of the Demon King, the things that I've done could very well be taken as the outlook of the entire Demon Race Territory, no, rather, taking it that way would be natural. I regret the rash actions that I've taken, but it's already too late.
This is a being who is powerful enough to make the daughter of the Demon King feel awe; I can't even imagine what a disaster it would be if this power turned towards our country.
I need to appease their anger here no matter what. To do so, I must not hesitate even if I need to offer myself to them; that is the responsibility of those born with the blood of the Demon King.

I was still frozen at the entrance, but if I stay standing here, I will be in danger of upsetting them. While suppressing my desire to escape, I stepped into the room.

With each step that I took, the pressure that I was thrust in front of continued to grow. While enduring this trial that felt like forcing myself against a river current, with a sense of duty and terror flaring up, I desperately moved my feet forward. Just the walking alone wore down the strength of my body, and of my will.
At a place a short distance from the throne, I stopped moving.
It's no good… I can't go on anymore… Thankfully it's close enough to speak, so I'll just talk from here.
My actions so far have probably given them a bad impression; my first words will probably be very important.

"Nice to meet "Please excuse my actions!" …you?"

I placed both hands and knees on the ground, and deeply bowed.
It's a posture of expressing one's greatest apology that a summoned hero once told us about──the dogeza.
Wha-, oh no! I accidentally cut off their words. This is rude in itself.
Hmph! At this point I have no choice but to rain apologies down upon them.

"Um, "I deeply apologise for my many acts of rudeness! If it's something I can do, I will do anything! So, please… please have mercy on my countrymen!" "

A-, Again!?
Uuu, what terrible luck I have…

“No, you really need to “I beg of you, please punish me alone.” …listen to me.”

———————— -!?

Coupled with those cold words was a knife that was thrown, stabbing into the floor before my eyes. In terror, I let out a voiceless scream.
This is bad. I’ve angered somebody that I absolutely couldn’t displease.

“Raise your head, and stand.”

“H-, However…”

“Just do it.”

Being firmly told that, I sensed that staying in this posture any longer would have the opposite effect, so I snapped upright. I was going to try and explain myself for displeasing them, but before that, she spoke to me first.

“I’m not angry.”

“Eh?”

I was trembling with fear about what she would say to me, but what came were words I hadn’t even imagined, so I accidentally made a foolish sound.

“I have no intention of punishing you either.”

“T-, Truly!?”

She spoke her words blandly, but being told that like a small child being taught, I finally realised that she wasn’t hostile. Because the relief was so great, tears came out. With this, my country won’t be destroyed.

“And also, about the 10th floor boss…”

“R-, Right! Of course I shall carry out my duties with all my heart!”

“You don’t need to do it.”

“Pardon?”

In order for my country to escape retribution, I had prepared myself for what I thought would be inevitable, but I completely avoided it. No, I mean, it helps to not have to serve her, but now I’m anxious about whether that’s really all right.

“In exchange, there’s a favour I’d like to ask.”

“W-, Whatever you would like!”

S-, So it really *wouldn’t* end so easily. It seems that she wants to make me do something in exchange.
No, certainly, having the matter end with just me is still a cheap price to pay. The cause of all this was because of my rash and blind conduct, so no matter what kind of humiliation or pain, I have to make peace with it.
Now then, what is it? What do you wish of me!?
“I want you to be my friend.”

……Huh?

Frehnd?
Aah, ‘friend’? ———wai-, friend!?

“F-, Friend…?”

S-, She wants to become friends with me? What on earth is she thinking about?
I am not proud, but in the 16 years since I’ve been born, I have never had a single friend. Even if she tells me that she wants to be friends, I don’t know what to do. It isn’t my fault; being born as the Demon Princess meant that from the beginning there was no change of building up a relationship of equals. It is definitely not because of my appearance or my demeanour.
That is what I would like to believe.

Oh, no good. Either way, I have no choice but to accept their request. Honestly speaking, I would feel far more relieved had they told me to become their subordinate, or had they whipped me, but…

“U-, Understood! Please allow me to humbly become your friend.”

“We’re friends, so you don’t need the keigo.”

“Unders… Got it.”

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We moved to Anri’s residential area on the 31st floor, and I received a warm welcome.
She told me that she was a human at the same time that she introduced herself, but honestly speaking, unbelievable. It’s unbelievable, but her adventurer card says that she belongs to the human race as well, so I have no choice but to believe. The person herself said that she received the skills from the Evil God, and since the feeling of terror softened once she moved her gaze away, I could confirm that the skill was the cause. Apparently apart from her gaze, she also has an aura that brings about fear, but that one is only at the level of giving you chills, so there apparently isn’t a problem.
We ended up being able to speak to each other normally as long as our eyes didn’t meet, but at any rate, this is my first friend, so I wasn’t sure about how close or distant we were supposed to be.

However, even I know that being dunked in the bath by a friend you’ve only just made is not normal.
And well, I *was* worried about how I was smelling since I was all dirtied with blood and sweat from searching the dungeon, but being told that so frankly really pierced my heart. But it’s also the truth that I was thankful. I wouldn’t have thought that I’d get to have a bath in a dungeon.
The baths that I’m used to are tubs that you filled with hot water, about a size you can wrap your arms around, but when I saw that the bath here was shockingly half of the room, and was always filled with water even without going out of your way to fill it up, I ended up dumbfounded.
I took off my armour, and then took off my dress and got nude, before sinking into the bathtub.

“……Huu.”

I reflexively leaked a sigh. The feeling of the warmth of the water sinking into my body couldn’t be topped. Because various things happened, it seemed that more weariness had built up than I’d expected, and my consciousness accidentally dimmed.

The sound of a knock brought me back from my nap, and I raised my almost submerged face in a fluster. Whoa, whoa. I almost drowned. I don’t know how long I was out of it, but from the pruning of my fingers, it seems that it wasn’t short.

“Please excuse me.”

Together with those words, a beautiful blonde girl entered the bathroom. The knock from before was probably her. The girl wearing the strange black outfit is named Tena, and was introduced as Anri’s follower.

“I’ll leave your change of clothes here, if that’s all right.”

“Yeah, thank you.”

It seems that she brought me a change of clothes. The dress I was wearing up until now was quite dirtied, so I was actually wondering what I’d do. I hadn’t really minded up until I got into the bath, but now that I’m all clean, wearing dirtied clothes again would feel bad, so I’m feeling that I should just accept it and be thankful.

“I can wash the clothing you were wearing but, will you be all right with that?”

“Yeah, thanks. Can I ask you to do that for me?”

I feel bad having her do everything from beginning to end for me, but I’ve never done anything like laundry before, so I had no choice but to rely on her.
Tena picked up the dress and armour that I’d been wearing, and left the bathroom.

I accidentally fell asleep while in the bath, so having not properly cleaned myself yet, I began washing myself from the hair down.
After that, I relaxed in the bath some more, before finally decided to get out with regret.
Using the towel that had been placed besides my change of clothes without me noticing, I wiped down my body, and after drying myself, I put on the clothing…

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Wai-, I'm supposed to wear this clothing covered in frills!?

The truth is, Leonora-sama was frilly all throughout the girls' talk.

Side story 09 – A Certain Founder's Faith

When I was young, the world seemed filled with colour.

At the time, I had never doubted the flowery lifestyle I had been born into as a noble.
I wasn't the eldest son so I couldn't inherit the household, but because our family was high ranked I assumed that I would be wedded into some other family, and in fact that was what my father was thinking about.

In the Kingdom of Fortera, the nobility were split into three rough factions. The first was the Royalist Faction; a gathering of nobles that pledged their allegiance to the king and royal family. The second was the Feudal Lords Faction; a faction that pushed for the benefits of nobles, and occasionally opposed the Royalists Faction. Finally, was the Church Faction; a gathering of nobles with deep connections to the Church of Sacred Light, and took a neutral stand in the scuffle between the other two factions.
The power of the nation was roughly divided into 4 parts Feudal Lords, 3 parts Royalists, 2 parts Church, and 1 part for all the other factions, as well as those individualistic nobles that didn't join any factions at all.

Because my family was a powerful family within the Church Faction, I had joined the Church of Sacred Light when I was young, and often met with people from the Church. When I was young I had just simply believed in what I was taught, and worshipped the Sacred Goddess, but as I grew older and came into contact with the Church more and more, I began to see reality.

Widespread bribery and debauchery, fat ministers who thought only about exploiting the believers; a vulgar situation unlike the public image.

By that time, I was old enough to know that there wasn't any meaning in screaming 'this is wrong'. The upper echelons who were foremost in this injustice would surely pay me no heed. The nobility in the Church Faction weren't pious either, and were a group of nobles who wanted to use the

Church's backing to gain profits, and people who actually had faith were the minority. It was obvious that trying to expose this unfairness would just fall upon deaf ears.
Being afraid of isolation, I decided to keep my feelings locked in my heat. And before long, my faith had left me.

My colourful world had been a grey world painted in falsehoods.

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Now that I had found it bothersome to deal with nobility or the Church, although I kept up appearances, I would occasionally sneak out of my house. Having said that though, it wasn't as though I had anywhere I wanted to go. I just wanted to see a world with colour, and so I spent my time walking around town dressed like a commoner. Unlike the world of nobles or the Church, the town still seemed filled with colour.
It was around this time that I hid my identity and registered as an adventurer. To begin with, as a noble of the Church Faction, I had been brought up in the use of a mace. Because of that, I immediately distinguished myself in the Guild. Before I knew it, I had made companions to do the requests with, and as I spent each day having fun, the colour came back to the world———up until my companions died from wounds during a request.

They were heavy wounds, but by no means were they heavy enough that they wouldn't be saved. If they were carried into a church and received the healing of a cleric, they should have been able to live longer. The problem was that the bishops that could use high level healing magic were all occupied with the Noble Faction, and healing for just an adventurer was left for later. Once you excluded the bishops, the Church only had young clerics, and you couldn't hope for proper healing from them.
Had I used my family name, I might have been able to give them priority, but at the same time it would mean exposing my background and it was clear that I wouldn't be able to spend time with them like we had been. In order to save my companions, I had to cut my ties with them; because of

this decision, I couldn't come to a decision. By the time I had finally decided to expose myself, my companions had already stopped breathing.

The world once again returned to grey.
For my own conveniences, I had abandoned my companions. Because of that, I couldn't live the way I had been anymore. I lamented and regretted, but my companions wouldn't return.
I stopped showing up at the Guild, and spend my days drinking cheap liquor in a tavern.
One day, a man I knew from the bar invited me to a certain gathering. The group didn't have a name, but having originally been close with the Church, I immediately realised who they were———a gathering of those who worshipped the god that the Church referred to as the Evil God. The past me would probably have scorned them and stayed away, but having half given up on myself, I participated in the gathering.

And then I came across my second, and final faith.

In the gathering, they talked about the injustice of the Church of Sacred Light, as well as the God that opposed the Sacred Goddess.
The former were things that I had always thought about, and kept hidden in my heart without talking to anyone about. Having found a place where people sympathised with me for the first time, I rejoiced.
As for the latter, although the Church of Sacred Light had spoken about that god as well, they taught that that God was an evil being that wished for the meaningless destruction of the world. No, I'm sure the truth was that the Church of Sacred Light simply *couldn't tell* why they wanted to destroy the world.
When the people of the world fall into depravity, the true God will save them through destruction. To the depraved Church of Sacred Light, it's obvious that such a god would be bad news for them. Because the Church, as well as the Sacred Goddess they worshipped concealed their depravity, they persecuted this god as the Evil God.
I had found a being truly worthy of my faith.
While secretly using the authority and assets of my family, as well as my connections with the Church that I shunned, I elevated myself within our Faith.

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There was a rumour that the god that we worshipped had descended to a certain dungeon. It was information I had obtained from the Church of Sacred Light, but because this was a matter of importance to them as well, it was hard to think that these were lies. If it turned out to be true, we needed to welcome God at all costs.
Having been recognised for my contributions to the cause, I had been left in charge of this area, and so I directed my fellow believers to Riemel where the dungeon was.

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Because the believers of the Sacred Light would get in the way if they found out, we decided to split up and head for the dungeon entrance, and meet up once it was time. Fortunately, there didn't seem to be any adventurers visiting the dungeon at night, so there was nobody but us.
Because there was a large room on the 1st floor, we decided to hold the ritual there. The believers set up the fire, cauldron and altar whilst I meditated until the ritual began in order to heighten my concentration.

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After a while, all the believers had gathered, and the ritual began.
We burnt an incense that uplifted one's mind, and heightened our concentration to call forth God. Because I was the one managing things I was wearing a priest's outfit, but the other believers removed their bothersome clothes to cast off their ties to the world. There were also believers who lay with each other to offer that lust to our God.

Feeling the surge of piety and that everything was progressing smoothly, I walked to the middle of the room, and raised my right hand. The frenzied believers immediately went silent, but they were as feverish as ever… No, that feverish enthusiasm had increased.

"We now begin the ritual of offerings!"

Together with my shout, the believers all raised cries of joy.
They prepared a stone altar, and lay atop it the girl that had been bought as a sacrifice.

“Nnnnnn————!!”

It pained my heart to see the girl struggling in tears, but this too was for the sake of our faith. I believe that her soul will be retrieved by our God to serve as the cornerstone of the new world.

“O god of ours, please accept our humble offering.”

With those words, I brought down the raised dagger towards the girl’s heart.
I felt the feeling of cutting flesh that I had experienced in my adventurer days, together with a splash of fresh blood… That’s what should have happened, but the next thing that I felt was the sensation of stabbing at something hard, and the sparks that came with it.
The dagger than I had swung downwards had faintly marked the stone altar, and snapped at the tip. The girl that should have accepted the dagger with her body was nowhere to be seen.

What-, just what was going on!?
Where had the girl sacrifice gone?

Although I had fallen into confusion from the sudden events, I immediately realised what had happened.
The girl was tied up before me; she had no means to escape on her own, and there was no way I wouldn’t have noticed had somebody else rescued her.
If there *was* someone who could do such a thing, then it could only have been our God!
We had always been faithful until now, but the power of our faith was insufficient, and so we had never received a response from God.
However. However! This time, for the first time, God had shown a response to our ritual!
Aahh, the rumours were true! Our God had truly descended!

In my joy, I made an announcement to the believers.

“Have you all not seen it yourself!? Our God has accepted our humble offering.”

Perhaps my words had finally made them realise the situation because cheers of joy rang all around. Satisfied, I faced the direction that I believed our God was watching from, and waited for Their words.

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『…Untasty.』

However, the words that came to me were much too unexpected. What’s more, the voice was that of a female, still young. The sex of our God had never been recorded, but was She a goddess?
No, I can worry about that later. If She wasn’t satisfied, then as her faithful servants, we needed to apologise.

“Eh-? Ah-… Please excuse us! Umm, did it not suit your esteemed palate?”

『Humans, demons, unpalatable. Oxen, pigs, chickens, goats──animals recommended.』

Oohhh, God of ours. Are you asking us to go buy you meat from the butcher?

“U-, Understood! U-, Um… I am truly sorry to trouble you, but is there no mistake in that you are our God?”

I know quite well that it was insolence to ask such a thing, but I couldn’t help but do so. We had been granted the humble chance to exchange words with the god who had been silent thus far. This was something I needed to determine, even at the cost of my life.

『Indeed.』

“Oohhh! Receiving your words is the acme of honour!”

It was. It really was our God!
I could feel my body being filled with joy and emotion.

『Although it did not suit my palate, it is true that you have done me service with your offering. As such, I bestow this staff.』

Together with this unexpected praise appeared a single staff atop the altar. A jet black staff that seemed to house all the darkness of the world; simple though it looked, it was a staff with a polished design, and even without touching it, I could feel an incredible power emanating from it.

"T-, This is!? T-, To think that I would be granted a divine weapon-!"

This overwhelming power was unmistakably a divine weapon.
I took the presented staff in hand, and trembled from joy.
Aahh, I was born all for this moment.

『Continue to be zealous in your faith.』

"Understood-!"

Of course. You needn't even say it. My faith and devotion is all for your sake.
Raising the bestowed staff into the air, I turned towards the believers and shouted.

"As of this moment, I declare myself as the Founder of our Faith who will guide everyone on their path! This staff bestowed from God is the proof of my faith! Those who object, speak now!"

It was as good as declaring a supersession within the Faith, but even the previous leaders of the Faith could not deny the truth that I had been bestowed a divine weapon from God. No, rather, I would not allow them to deny it.
God told me to continue to endeavour in my faith; even if they were the "Former" Founder, I would not allow them to get in the way of my faith.

"As Founder Harvin, I declare that we will build upon this place a temple to worship our God!"

Now then, things are going to get busy from now on.

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Aahh, the colours of the world are brighter than ever!

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Later on, the “Former” Founder and leaders from various areas reproached me for naming myself Founder, but as proof that God had directly acknowledged my faith, nobody could stop me from becoming Founder any longer.
After all, apart from myself, nobody could hold the divine weapon, and even if I let it out of my hands, it would return to my side. There was no doubt that this was proof that I had been chosen.
Oohh, God of ours! I shall follow you to the end!
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TL: There’s a line that reads ‘中には信徒同士交わることでその陰気を神への供物とする者も居ます。’ *but I’m assuming* 陰気*(melancholy/gloom/Yin) here was a typo for* 淫気*(lust). Normally I’d say this for sure, but then this is an Evil God and everything, and there’s a tiny chance that I’m overlooking some cultural thing.*

Side story 10 – A Certain Prince's Despair

"You-! This is plain harassment!"

General Godwin struck the round table in the center of the conference room with his fist.

"I understand how you feel, but calm down, General. His Majesty is here."

"F-, Forgive my rudeness!"

Chastised by the Prime Minister Lord Forgen, the angry General Godwin suddenly came back to his senses and apologised to my father in a fluster.

"It's fine. I feel the same way."

Not just my esteemed father; it was likely that nobody gathered here would blame the General's words. The reason was because the people here all held the same feelings.
At present, the topic of discussion for the group called the Royalists Faction was that the Church of Sacred Light had declared an edict for the formation of the Order of the Sacred Light. It was an edict regarding the subjugation of a group of adherents of an Evil God cult that were gathered in a certain dungeon near our kingdom, Fortera. But no matter who looked at the situation, it was clearly an overreaction to form and mobilise the Order of Sacred Light just to subjugate a group of cultists not even numbering 1000. The Church of Sacred Light claimed that it was because traces of a being that appeared to be the Evil God was witnessed in the dungeon in question, and the formation of the Order was necessary for the sake of its investigation, and if possible sealing or subjugation.

There was no lie more barefaced.
Because the higher-ups of each nation knew that the Evil God was a fictitious threat created by the Church, after all. The Church wasn't

seriously aiming for the subjugation of the Evil God either, and the other nations passed this suggestion knowing quite well that it was a lie.

“So it really was because of the proposal from the other day.”

“That seems to be the case. There are no other reasons.”

The Church of Sacred Light is the largest religion in the Human Territory, and is the official religion of all nations. Because of that, the money that each nation donates to the Church’s headquarters, the Luxiria Theocracy is no small amount. Of course, our Fortera is no exception.
However, because the crops and tax yields in our kingdom were anticipated to be lower than average this year, we declared that we would be reducing next year’s contribution to the Theocracy.
There was probably no doubt that it was correct to interpret this edict as revenge for the contribution announcement.

Although it was the formation of the ‘Order of Sacred Light’, in truth it was a coalition force of the knights and soldiers of various countries. With an edict from the Luxiria Theocracy, they expected participation from various countries, but because it was officially participation in order to fulfil their duties towards the Church of Sacred Light, there was no remuneration. If this was the invasion of the Demon Territory, then there would be de facto remuneration in the form of territory distribution, but because this time was the formation of the Order in order to solve a domestic issue, there would be no such thing.
Of course, our kingdom has no responsibility to give out remunerations for this. But despite this, if a domestic issue of ours is solved by the military of other nations, we’ll end up owing a debt, and would need to take this into account in future diplomatic exchanges.

“Revenge, and an example to the others, huh.”

“You could certainly interpret this as a show of force through the difference in military power.”

The other nations probably understand the Church’s purpose in this edict as well.

Not to mention that they're sending this message as well: 'If you report that you'll be decreasing your donation, this is what will happen to you.'

"It's too late to change the donation back, isn't it."

"Now that the formation of the Order has already been announced, it is probably impossible. And to begin with, the reason we reported a reduction was because we couldn't pay it. You can't use money that you don't have."

"…"

"…"

The meeting sank into silence.

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"So, what will you do? We received a strong suggestion that as one of the nations involved we should scout out the location and set up camp, but…"

"Making us do subordinate work on top of harassing us, huh? Just how much do they intend on messing with our kingdom."

Both scouting and setting up camp formations are certainly important for an army, but it's difficult to gain achievements for doing it. The more achievements another country gains, the larger the debt our kingdom will owe them, so this too was a form of harassment.
But this was a good chance as well.

"I shall lead the army and head for the battlefront."

"Your Highness!?"

Hearing my declaration, the people sitting around the round table all turned their gazes to me.

"Hmm, and your intention?"

“Pretend to scout and set up camp, and just subjugate the enemy at the same time. We might be slandered for acting arbitrarily by the other nations and the Church, but this should be better than letting them gain large achievements and owing them a large debt. If we say that the young commander was anxious for merits, it shouldn’t seem unnatural.”

I answered my father’s question with my plan.
The other nations might be quite disgruntled because they had gone out of the way to prepare their armies, but as long as they hadn’t actually headed for battle, they probably wouldn’t be able to strongly demand anything from us.
The Church of Sacred Light probably won’t stay silent, but given that their official aim was the subjugation of the Evil God and cultists, they shouldn’t be able to openly criticise us.

“But there should be no need for you to take the blame, Your Highness.”

“As a member of the royal family, the other nations shouldn’t be able to strongly reproach me. If any other commander does it, they may demand punishment.”

Even if they can’t publicly condemn the Kingdom, it’s entirely possible that they would blame the commander personally for disobeying orders. Once you consider this, I can’t leave the role to the generals.
Perhaps because they understood my intentions, the Prime Minister and General reluctantly fell into silence.

“How is it, Your Majesty?”

“…Very well. I shall leave it to you.”

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Having set up camp in front of the dungeon in question, I gazed at the Evil God worshippers before me.
The enemy had also set up a military formation, but you could say that it was entirely crude. On top of the fact that they barely reached a thousand people, there were elderly people, as well as women and children mixed in,

so they wouldn't even put up a proper fight. It was obvious that they didn't even have enough troops to set up an ambush, so I had faith that as long as I sent the soldiers forward, we would easily crush them.
Honestly speaking, it was strange that having come to this they still hadn't run away and scattered, but was this also because of their disgusting piety?

Having thought that far, I accidentally let a wry smile slip.

"Your Highness?"

"No, it's nothing."

Finding my smile strange, General Godwin had questioned me, and I told him not to worry.

Disgusting piety, huh?
The fact that I can't understand those who would worship something like the Evil God hadn't changed, but after this incident, the piety that we the Forteran Royal Family had towards the Church of Sacred Light had fallen to rock bottom. Of course, there was no way we could reveal such thoughts to the citizens after all, and we certainly weren't opposed to Sacred Goddess-sama, but at the very least, I had no intention of believing in the corrupted Church that was rampant with money-worshipping. Both as the prince, and as a person.
Between the believers of the Evil God who were risking their lives, and the people who secretly demanded money under the flag of the Sacred Light, just who was better? When I started wondering this, I found it so funny that I couldn't help but smile.

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Lightly shaking my head, I switched gears.

──Both of them were the same.
If they threaten our kingdom, then they must be eliminated. This was my duty as a member of the Forteran Royal Family.

“Look at the formation of these evil bastards, General! What a pathetic formation.”

“Indeed.”

With the General by my side, I looked at the cultists in front of me before speaking in a loud enough voice that the knights and soldiers around us could hear.

“With an enemy more worthless than garbage, can’t we subjugate them on our own even without the Order’s main forces?”

“Indeed, however we were instructed to scout and set up formation.”

Reciting our lines exactly as planned, it felt like I had become a clown. However, that didn’t matter. What I wanted to become was a foolish and hot-blooded prince.

“We can end things if we attack now. There is no need for either scouting nor formations.”

“Your Highness, that is…”

But still, the General… can’t he do anything about that acting? Isn’t he speaking in monotone?

“That is of no concern! Sitting here while the cultists lie before us will incur the wrath of Sacred Goddess-sama! All troops, commence mar──!?”

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Just as I was about to give orders, at that moment, the sound of an explosion resounded around us. At the same time, *something* seemed to rise before our eyes.
“————!?”

As I was speechless from the confusion at this incomprehensible scene, *that* made itself known.

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“…”

“…”

“…”

Everybody looked up dumbly at the scene.
In a place that had been a simple clearing until now, suddenly rose an ominous, yet somehow divine feeling temple.

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Were my eyes telling the truth…?
Wasn’t this almost a feat of God? It couldn’t be that the Evil God truly resided in this dungeon, could it?
But no, the Evil God was supposed to be an imaginary being concocted by the Church.
However, this scene was…

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Almost as though cornering us in our bewilderment, the abnormal scene continued.

Night suddenly fell around us, and the surroundings were filled with faint light.
I could feel that this series of abnormalities had caused chaos to spread through the soldiers.

The General and I tried to call our to sooth the soldiers, but sooner than we could, a staircase of darkness stretched down from the top floor of the temple to the ground.

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Neither I, nor the General, nor the soldiers nor the cultists did anything but turn our gazes to those stairs.
No, strictly speaking it wasn’t the stairs that we were watching, but the one descending them.

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At a glance, they seemed to be a girl.

With a relatively small figure with jet black hair and a jet black robe, they slowly descended the staircase with two girls in tow.
Everybody had forgotten how to speak, and held their breath as they looked up at that figure.

Finally, when that figure had reached a landing halfway down, we could see the face that had been invisible until now.
A face with features beautiful like a doll, and a turbid gaze that seemed not of this world… Glared at by those eyes, I felt goosebumps all across my body.
In the midst of this silence, devoid even of the sound of breathing, I unconsciously muttered,

"… … … … … …Evil God."

In that moment, the word 'Evil God' seemed to spread like wildfire through the soldiers.

"RUNNN!"

The moment that somebody shouted that, our formation collapsed.
Both the soldiers and the knights ran away in chaos.
Given our positions, the General or I would normally have needed to stop that. But, we couldn't.
And the reason was because both the General and I as well, had lost all thought of remaining there from the sheer terror.
Together with the soldiers, we turned our backs to that temple as we ran towards town as fast as we could.

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I thought that the Evil God was just some fictitious being fabricated by the Church.

I was sure that even this whole disturbance was just the theatrics of some fanatics.
But I was wrong!
If that wasn't the Evil God, then what else could it be!

We were deceived!
It wasn't that the Church of Sacred Light had created an imaginary enemy to fool the masses, but that they had pretended to the leaders of each country that a real enemy was imaginary.
And the reason was probably because that the Evil God was an inconvenient truth to the Church.
Could it be that even Sacred Goddess-sama's esteemed power is no match for it?
But no, something like that can't…

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..*
As though ridiculing me for reaching a dead end in my thoughts, as I ran, a black flash appeared behind me.
For a moment, everybody stopped and turned their heads in that direction, but that flash flew off into the distance.
The soldiers around me felt relieved, but I instead had trembled in terror.
That light was most likely… an enormous mass of mana that the Evil God had fired as a joke.
It was good that it had been fired in a different direction, but had it been fired as us, or the town, or even the capital, then…

..*
..*
While praying in my heart that the Evil God didn't aim our way, I once again began my escape to town.

With this, the side stories have reached the main story, but to tie the side stories in, there will be one more short story to go.

Side story 11 – A Certain Evil God's Sneer

『Candidate "Anri" has exceeded the required faith and fear levels.』
『Race has been changed from "Human Race" to "Divine Race".』
『Job has been changed from "Mage" to "Administrator".』
『Title has upgraded from "Child of the Evil God" to "Evil God of Fearful Trembling".』
『Gained title "Third Administrator".』
『Gained skill "Administration".』

..*
..*
"Ohh? Never thought that she'd bud *this* quickly."
As he saw through the screen that the thing he sent just the other day had already become a member of the Divine Race, he laughed.

It was originally just a way to kill time. No, even now, it was still basically the case.
It had all started when he had noticed by chance some faith that was floating around in a low-ranked world based on stories. It was faith towards his type, so he had considered devouring it, but following an idea he came up with on a whim, he sent in a something that seemed suitable as a vessel, and decided to watch and see how things unfolded. If things went well, it would mean the birth of a new member of his kin, while if things failed, it wouldn't be any real loss.

"It was pretty fun watching the process. Sending her in as a human was the right choice, huh."

She might have gathered faith faster had she been sent in as an apostle, but he decided to just cram skills into her as a human and enjoy watching the show. Honestly speaking, he had crammed enough into her that it wouldn't have been strange for her soul to collapse, but you could say it turned out well because she was good material.
When he had spotted that girl in a high ranking world, he had

unconsciously sighed in wonder. It wasn't often that you'd find a human with eyes close to his kind's.

"Now that a new administrator has been born, the other divines probably won't stay quiet. I'm really interested to see what happens next."

There were originally two administrators in that world.
They would very soon know that a new administrator had been born. No, there was also the chance that they already knew. It was impossible to ignore a new administrator being born in the world they administrated, so it made sense that they would soon approach her somehow.
And because there were many cases where members of his type were hated by others, so to begin with there was definitely no way things would happen peacefully.
The world would probably be wrapped up in a power struggle between fellow divines.

"Aahh, I'm looking forward to it. So looking forward to it."

Power struggle though it might be, in the end it was just something that would happen in a low-ranked world, so even if it was something that involved his kin, he didn't plan on interfering.
Even if she was destroyed in defeat, that was just how it was. Just one favourite toy being broken.
It was all for his amusement, just simply killing time.
But it was also the truth that it seemed like things would be quite fun this time.
It was all thanks to the 'beloved daughter'[thing] that he had sent in. It was just a random idea he had come up with, but once he gave it a go, it had turned out to be the right choice.

..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
"Aahh, I'm really glad that I created you."

..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
As he saw through the screen his kin writhing around like a caterpillar as she had her legs poked by the people there, he laughed.

“If you manage to seize the power from the other two, maybe I’ll give you a reward.”

..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
..*
TL: In Japanese, ‘laugh’ and one way of saying ‘sneer’ are the same. 笑う *and* 嗤う *are both read as ‘warau’, so in the second last line, I wrote ‘laughed’ to keep the repeat sounding good. In truth, it’s more like he laughed in ridicule. I made this decision because she obviously meant for the two lines to parallel each other. Had she wanted to strongly emphasise sneering, I think she would’ve used* 嘲笑う (azawarau) *or something.*

Evil God Average

【Second Half - Book of God】

Chapter 1 – The Beginning of a Dark History

I've heard a saying before about how it's easier to destroy something than create.
It's a somewhat paradoxical saying that emphasises the difficult of creating things.
Whether it's buildings, or artwork, or culture, when you create something, a lot of time and effort is needed to do so.

imouto
But if I had to add one more line to that——

imouto
——it would be that cleaning up after things that you accidentally create are also quite a pain. Including bad things that you've accidentally done.

imouto
And if I had to add one more line on top of that——

imouto
——it would be that if you leave it to somebody else because cleaning up is a pain, there also exists the fear of things getting worse.

imouto
The newly erected temple, the Forteran Army that was driven away, the Evil God Followers who ended up saved because of this, and more than anything else, I myself, who had become an Evil God.
There were so many problems that I didn't even know where to begin, so I decided to create a rough order of precedence, and allocate people wherever I could. There shouldn't be anything wrong with this line of thinking.
And to me, the point of highest priority was dealing with the fact that I'd become an evil god, and all other matters were lower. Considering this once again, I still think this was correct.

So that's why. That's why…

imouto
"As our great god's──Anri-sama's, servant, I, Pope Harvin, hereby declare, the establishment of the 『Holy Anri Thearchy』!"

imouto
I want to believe that this isn't my fault.
Also, I'd like for you to stop with that name. Very much so.

◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

The Evil God Followers were taken in on the first surface floor of the temple, and I left their care to Tena and Leonora. Having said that though, I had no intention of worrying as far as the minor details, and the fundamental idea was to have them arrange themselves.

"And so, why did it turn into *this*?"
"Even if you ask me that… you know?"

"I just passed on the message, 『Gather your followers over there.』 exactly as you said, Anri-sama, but…"

After Tena and Leonora returned to the top floor of the temple, they told me about the details regarding the speech that the Merry Founder──now, the Merry Pope, gave beyond the monitor, but apparently Tena just passed on the message as is. So how did it have anything to do with founding a country…?

"You'll probably need to ask him yourself… But whatever the reason, now that he's declared as such, you can't so easily take it back, you know."

"I know."

What's more, although we declared that we were creating a country, in the end our situation was just that of insisting that it was true. There's the fact that we weren't being acknowledged by other countries as well, but that was because we hadn't created a country yet. We were just a temple

sheltering 1000 refugees, without even a single house, so of course it that much was natural.
But since that announcement had already been accepted by the followers, it was too late to say otherwise.
Of course, I could use my position as God to force the decision to withdraw the announcement, but once I considered the chaos that would ensue, I couldn't so easily take the plunge.

"Why do they know my name?"

"They begged me, 『Please, please tell us!』 so I ended up telling them, but… was that no good?"

I replied to Tena's worried question with a shake of the head.
There was the fact that I hadn't forbidden her to do so as well, and since there was the benefit of being more famous and familiar amongst the followers, I had no intention of criticising her. Because right after that announcement, my belly felt full. At the time I didn't know what was going on and fell into confusion, but apparently, because the announcement had made my name known, the effectiveness of their faith ended up rising, or so I concluded later on.

Having become a member of the Divine Race, I didn't need to eat, drink, or use the bathroom any more, but in exchange, how full I felt apparently depended on the religious faith that the people of this world had towards me. I guess that's how it ended up.
Right now I had faith, so I was happy with a full stomach, but if the faith towards me dropped too much, then I'd be stuck with feeling hungry. Not only that, even eating food wouldn't fill that hunger, so until the faith towards me restored, I'd continue to starve…
Considering this, forming a country might be convenient for me; mostly in the sense that keeping myself famous would fill my stomach. Although, far from solving any problems, the fact that problems had just increased gave me a headache, and I'm worried about the reactions of the other countries too.

I wish is to live peacefully, but I don't want to suffer and starve either. The ideal would be to maintain a deadlock where I'd preserve just enough faith,

while not being invaded by any countries.
Having said that though, just being the Evil God Country would be famous enough, so…

“At least change the name.”

“Why? Isn’t it a fine name?”

“I think so too. And furthermore, the name is already well-known amongst the followers, and so, changing it now would be…”

It’s damned embarrassing. Embarrassing enough to roll about in agony on my bed.
Also, why is an evil god-worshipping country prefixed with ‘Holy’? I seriously want to know.

“It isn’t just the followers, you know. That guy has already sent out letters to every nation, after all.”

Why the heck is he so needlessly proactive!? If it’s already spread that far, isn’t it impossible to change now!?
Letting that country name become known across the land, what kind of shame torture is this?

No, wait, wait, thinking about it carefully, there’s a more important issue.
Isn’t sending something like “We created the nation of the Evil God” to every nation basically the same as a declaration of war?
And in a situation where far from being a “nation”, we’re not even a “village” yet?

“Every country is going to come attack us.”

“Although you can’t let your guard down, for now you’ll be fine.”

I asked Leonora ‘Why?’ with my gaze and… she averted her eyes. Although I’ve become a divine now, my mystic eyes are still in good health. I’m just glad that they haven’t gotten worse though.

“The country right beside ours is the Kingdom of Fortera. Considering what happened the other day, they’ll probably be cautious about invading.”

Well, I certainly did threaten the Forteran Army quite terribly. I guess they won’t invade right this second. Having said that though, just as Leonora said, I can’t let my guard down and it’s just a matter of time.

“For now, tell them that they can use the first three terrarean floors, Tena. Also, I’ll leave the management of the country to that Pope.”

“Yes, Anri-sama. I understand.”

Although I’m worried about choosing the Pope, incredibly worried about choosing the Pope… he was apparently the peacemaker in the cult, and there was no reason to change it. Moreover, I couldn’t think of anybody else for the job.
Incidentally, I’m using the 5th and top layer as another residence, and prepared rooms for Tena and Leonora as well. As for Lili, she’s still too young to be on her own, so she’s sharing a room with Tena. However, Tena became busy recently, so I’ve been looking after Lili a lot of the time. Perhaps that had some effect, because as long as I didn’t meet her in the eyes, she’d seem pretty attached to me. I’m a little moved.
The 4th floor is serving as a line of defence. But the actual stronghold is on the subterranean 31st floor, so it’s fine even if I abandon this place when the time comes.
The dungeon core is still on the 31st floor, and I put a newly divided subcore on the 5th surface floor. In exchange for having a number of its functions sealed, like the ability to add floors, with the subcore I could check for abnormalities in the dungeon even without being on the 31st floor. Only, it didn’t function as a backup, and if the main dungeon core was destroyed, then the subcore would break as well.

I hadn’t really decided on what to do with the 3rd surface floor and below, so I offered it for use by the management of the country. With this place as the base, they’ll probably clear the land around the temple and build a town. Only, I don’t really know much about that, so I left it all to somebody else. While I was at it, I pushed all the exchanges with the Merry Pope to

Tena. No, I mean, I *am* sorry to Tena, but once I think about that guy's vigour, I'm afraid of meeting him directly.
Incidentally, although they're surface floors, they're still part of the dungeon. I made it so that monsters wouldn't spawn, but I couldn't stop the miasma. Only, unlike the floors underground, it was open here, so I dealt with the problem by blowing it outside.

imouto
imouto
"Speaking of which, is it really fine for you to stay here, Leonora?"

We'd stopped the conversation so that I could tell Tena to give instructions to the Pope, but I suddenly had that wonder, and so I asked her.
She's helped me with a lot of things, but thinking about it carefully, isn't it bad to be receiving "aid from another country"?

"Yeah, no problems. My country is focused on this place as well, you see. They want know what's going on. In exchange for letting me stay here for a while, I'll help out."

"…Thanks."

When I thanked her, Leonora combed her hands through her beautiful silver hair, as her face turned a little red, and she looked away.

"I-, It isn't really anything to thank me for. They're orders from my country, right? I'm something like a spy, you know."

If you were seriously stealing information, there'd be no need for you to tell me; would pointing this out to her be boorish?
It was obvious that she was worrying about me.

"S-, Speaking of which, have you grasped the effects of becoming an evil god?"

"About half of it."

In exchange for not needing to eat, excrete, or sleep, I experienced the fact that I apparently needed faith. I don't know about my lifespan, but since I'm a divine, I'm probably immortal. My mana and skills and stuff all went up across the board.
Also, although I didn't need to eat or sleep, it didn't mean that I couldn't, so I hadn't changed my lifestyle rhythm. I want to continue living life like a person to maintain my mental stability, after all. By no means is it because I won't get fat no matter how much I eat or sleep.
I was scared about what would happen if I used my power as an Administrator, so I hadn't tried it yet.

"Also, I can change my clothes now."

"Hah?"

Even with curses on the tantou or robe, since I had become a divine myself, I had overcome them. But it wasn't like the curses themselves had been dispelled, so I guess it would be more correct to say that even cursed, I alone could equip or remove them.
When I told her this, Leonora replied…

"Sorry to say this while you're happy about it, but you've already become recognised as wearing those clothes. If you change too often, it'll cause trouble."

"Why?"

"Well, even if you ask why, if God kept changing their clothing, it'd be unnatural, right?"

…Certainly, I've never heard of a god who changes their clothing all the time.
Even when it comes to statues or whatever, it's normal that they wear the same outfit.
Even though I'd finally been able to change… It seems that I'll forever have nothing to do with fashion.
Is this also the curse of the Evil God?

Chapter 2 – The Situation in Various Countries

『Well then, please tell us the situation in all the other countries.』

On the monitor, Tena called out to the people assembled there.
Sitting around the round table were the important members of the Faith, and of course, the Merry Pope was there as well.

Ever since the country-founding announcement, I sent people out to see how the other countries would move, and the information they gathered was to be presented at this meeting.

As for being there myself, with Tena already recognised as my representative, I left it to her and instead decided to watch on-screen from the top floor of the temple. Also, Lili was sitting next to me, reading a picture book and studying letters. In this world where the literacy rate and printing techniques were oddly high for a medieval European level, learning how to read was indispensable.

Tena sat on a special chair that was placed at the highest part behind the round table, and overlooked everybody gathered there. Just like how my appearance didn't change when I became a divine, Tena's appearance didn't change either when she became an apostle, but for some reason I get the feeling that she was now wrapped in a kind of transcendental atmosphere.

With beautiful blonde hair, a youthful but dignified face, as well as the black outfit with the mysterious atmosphere, it was like she was a princess or a shrine maiden from somewhere. Well, I guess she's exactly a shrine maiden.

『Well then, I shall begin. In regards to the movements of the Headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light, the Luxiria Theocracy, they immediately repudiated the announcement of our country's founding. They are appealing to the other nations to agree.』

A commotion ran through the meeting due to the sudden report.

『Calm yourselves. Anri-sama is watching us as well.』

The Pope's voice rang out through the noisy room, and the noise changed to complete silence.
Well yeah, I am watching, but there's no need to say it.

『We knew from the beginning that this was how the Luxiria Theocracy would act. The issue is how the other nations will respond. How do things proceed on that front?』

A woman raised her hand at the Pope's question.

『In regards to that, I will give the first report.』

『You're… As I recall, the one in charge of the Kingdom of Fortera, weren't you.』

『Yes.』

The Kingdom of Fortera was the nation that originally owned the place that we were in, and as somebody who was a stakeholder, you could say that they were the most important nation to us. I was very curious to know what news the report held.

『The Kingdom of Fortera rejected Luxiria's appeal. Furthermore, they raised complaints about the dishonesty of the current upper echelons of the Church, and created a new faction, taking a hostile position towards them. Furthermore, in regards to our country's founding announcement, they did not negate it, and are taking a neutral position.』

The meeting became even more noisy than before.
The Church of Sacred Light was the official religion for all nations in the Human Territory, and this was the first time in history that anybody had opposed it, so a commotion was natural. No, perhaps forming a new faction isn't actually defying the Church of Sacred Light itself.

『The name of the new faction is called the Origin Faction, and are based on being faithful to the teachings of the Goddess.』

『What reaction did the Luxiria Theocracy have towards Fortera's declaration?』

『Their Pope stated his own feelings of regret, and they seek a withdrawal of that decision.』

When the Pope received the woman's report, and asked that question of the man who first gave the report on Luxiria, he received a reply that you could say was natural. But if they were going to withdraw that decision, they wouldn't have made it to begin with, so it was already decided that the two would be hostile.

『The other nations also appear to be watching the confrontation between Luxiria and Fortera, and things are in a deadlock.』

Still, I wonder what's going on.
From Fortera's point of view, our country──we're a self-proclaimed country, but──our country had stolen their land and declared ourselves a nation, so Fortera should have been the first person to deny us. That's what I expected as well.
And the result was that they were taking a neutral stand, and taking a hostile position with the headquarters of the Church as well. I don't understand why they would take a hostile position with the Luxiria Theocracy before taking one with us.

"Has the situation progressed?"

When I turned around towards the voice that called out to me, I found the person who should have been in the Demon Territory gathering information, Leonora. The moment I turned to look at her, she averted her eyes. It was an very smooth motion… She's gotten used to it, hasn't she.

"Welcome back."

"Thanks. I just got back."

For information in the Human Territory, I can sort of leave it to the Pope and the others, but as you'd expect, that wouldn't fly in the Demon

Territory. Since we're right in-between both territories, I can't neglect the Demon Territory either. Because of that, I asked Leonora to gather information there. As you'd expected, I don't think she'll tell me anything disadvantageous to her country, but we're not hostile to the Demon Territory or anything, so just normal information is plenty.
Right, and I should see what Leonora thinks about the information from just now. She *is* royalty, so she might know what a country is planning. I'm worried about the fact that she's a muscle-head though.
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"I see…"

The discussion was still continuing, but since I heard the most important parts, I decided to take a break and discuss the situation with Leonora over tea. She crossed her arms, and sank into thought for a while. While patting Lili who was next to me, looking at the sweet bun with glittering eyes, I waited for Leonora to gather her thoughts.

"Hmm, three things come to mind."

"What are they?"

Leonora really is reliable. I'm sorry for thinking that you were a muscle-head.

"The first is that they're very simply afraid of you."

"…"

I was stupid for praising you. No, well, I certainly do think that they're scared of me, and as a guess that probably isn't wrong, but it was a pretty disappointing answer considering how much I was looking forward to it. While I was laying down on the table, Lili pat my head with her small palms. What a good girl.

"The second is that the Fortera and the upper echelons of the Church of Sacred Light had some kind of discord to begin with."

“Discord?”

“Yeah. Earlier when the Forteran Army invaded, I told you, 『If a problem within their country is dealt with by the Church or the Order, they will come to owe them a favour.』 didn’t I? In other words, the Church of Sacred Light knew that it would come to that, and yet they still tried to form the Order of the Sacred Light. It might that they simply put precedence over opposing the Evil God, but there’s also the possibility that they had some kind of discord with Fortera.”

“In other words, forming the Order of the Sacred Light was to put pressure on Fortera?”

“It’s nothing but conjecture, but yes.”

I see. Then if we take that as the truth, then certainly it does seem reasonable that the Kingdom and Theocracy would be quarrelling.

“The third is… the relationship with the Demon Territory.”

“…?”

What kind of relationship would that be?
Seeing me tilt my head just a little, Leonora continued to speak.

“Even within the Kingdom of Fortera, this spot is the closest to the Demon Territory. Fortera is the frontline against the Demon Territory, but if a country appears here, that situation will change. It wouldn’t be strange for them to determine that there are large merits for losing just a small amount of territory.”

“That’s…”

In other words, using us as a shield against the Demon Territory?
If they did that, then it would certain explain their neutrality towards us. If they want to use us as a shield, then it wouldn’t be good to have either an antagonist, nor a friendly relationship. The former would just make a new enemy in place of the Demon Territory, and the latter would mean that they

wouldn't be able to push us to the enemy.
And by taking a neutral stance with the Evil God Nation──as long as they weren't choosing to become our enemy, they would necessarily worsen their relationship with the Church of Sacred Light. And it was because they knew this in advance, that they revolted against the Luxiria Theocracy. That kind of thing?

"Both are possible, and it isn't the case that there can be only one reason either, after all. It might have surprisingly been the result of all three reasons combined."

That might be it.
For now, the fact that the most likely enemy Fortera, had now fallen into a deadlock with Luxiria was something very convenient for us.
We should work to fix our appearance as a nation while we still can.

"Speaking of which, what about the Demon Territory?"

"Ahh, they're basically just watching. As the Demon Race, they aren't fond of the 'Evil God', but that was because it was an idea used by humanity to demonise our Dark God. As a completely different person to the Dark God, there's no reason to be hostile to you. If it seems that through me, they can come to a mutual understanding with you, they'll probably be keeping this kind of relationship for the near future."

"I see."

I felt relieved after hearing that.
At the very least, it seems that for now, I'll be able to concentrate on the problems in the Human Territory.
Feeling full, I rubbed my drowsy eyes while patting Lili on the head, and let out a sigh of relief.

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『I suppose that just about sums up the situation in the other countries, and the management of our own. Finally, there is one thing that I would like you to convey to Anri-sama for me, Tena-sama.』

『What is it?』

Mn?
It seems that they wrapped up all the complicated stuff while I was resting, but the Pope began talking about something.

『The truth is, I have thought of a plan to make Anri-sama's splendour known to the other countries as well. I would by all means like to verify the details with Anri-sama.』

What is he planning…?
I'm worried. Terribly worried.

Chapter 3 – Progression of Heresy

『In the beginning, Anri-sama created the world.
Humans, animals, plants; all things that exist were created by Anri-sama's hand.
However, the foolish humans did not know.
Sophia the Evil God was jealous of Anri-sama, and pretended that Anri-sama's achievements were her own, and the people praised Evil God Sophia.

Anri-sama who lamented over the world dyed in heresy, decided that she would purge the world with only her believers remaining.
The believers of Evil God Sophia will surely burn in Hell for eternity.
Only those who believe in Anri-sama will be able to go to the new world, and obtain eternal happiness.』

After reading the words on the paper in my hand, I looked up and found that the Pope was standing there with eyes shining with some kind of expectation. Seeing that subtly proud face, the fact that his good looks were its only redeeming feature kind of pissed me off.

"…Leonora."

"Yeah."

Faiya~

"NOOOOOOH————!?

Leonora was standing next to me and had been peering in on it as well, and when I had her burn it away the Pope began to scream.

I didn't want to meet him so I had Tena act as my representative, but he specifically wanted me to have a look at something, so I even went out of my way to build an audience hall on the 4th floor, but I didn't think that I'd be made to read something like that. The reason I added this hall was

because they were treating me as a god, so I couldn't easily head down to the 3rd floor and below, and since I didn't want to invite him up to the 5th floor, there was no other place but the 4th.
Also, the reason I didn't want to call him up to the 5th floor was because I didn't want him to meet Lili. In his mind, Lili had been eaten by me, and as for Lili, she shouldn't want to meet somebody who tried to kill her either.
Only, although I know that he's somebody who tried to kill a person I'm close to, mysteriously I didn't feel any sense of repulsion. I think it's because his personality is so intense that the first impression was drowned out.
I wonder how Tena feels about this. She associates with him normally though.

"Why, Anri-sama————!?"

"Uwah-"

The Pope drew in with a flood of tears, and in my revulsion, I accidentally sent him flying with a shadow bullet. It was so sudden that I didn't hold back on my strength, or so I was thinking, but the Pope was just fine and immediately got up. I shouldn't be one to say this, but is guy really human?
To begin with, these eyes that even cause the daughter of the Demon King to dogeza don't seem to have any effect on him… Or rather, should I say that he even gets a little excited? It makes me want to avert my eyes myself.

"My apologies, I lost my composure. I am terribly ashamed, but could you please teach me what it was that was unsatisfactory?"

Even if you act all prim and proper now, it's too late you know.
And even if you ask me what was unsatisfactory, it's actually harder to point out something good about it. It's the first time that something's been so bad, that one of the less bad points is a good point. But well, if I had to pick the worst point, then…

"It's needlessly antagonistic. And there are lots of parts that are disconnected from the truth."

Even without antagonising them, the Church of Sacred Light might be hostile anyway, but that doesn't mean that there's a need to needlessly stir

them up. We're lucky enough that they're glaring at another country, so I don't want to provoke them and have their spearhead turned this way instead. And also, why did I end up the one who created the world? I have no memory of doing anything like that.

"Certainly, there are a few exaggerations mixed in."

A few? So this is 'a few'…
Or rather, before 'exaggeration', all I found were a bag of lies, but?

"However, we presently require something to gather people to our country. As such, I wanted to create a scripture. In order to draw interest, giving it a little impact would be better, wouldn't it?"

Please give me a break. Just imagining a nation formed from people gathered by that kind of scripture is giving me goosebumps.
But in regards to the need for scriptures, I guess I can't help but agree with his idea. I don't want to starve either, so the idea of propagating the religion itself is something I agree with. Then in that case…

"I'll write the scriptures."

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I might have been too hasty.
The blank paper in front of me was causing me to hold my head in trouble inside.
I accidentally said in front of the Pope that I would write it──the Pope gleefully left──but, since then the brush in my hand has written absolutely nothing.
To begin with, I only realised just now that there's no way the deity themselves would write the parts that worshipped and praised the deity, but it's much too late.

And also, even leaving that part aside, the rest of the contents are difficult too.
Amongst the believers gathered in the temple right now, many of them were in despair because of the Church of Sacred Light, or the social class

system. Because of that, I needed to write something revolutionary and reformist like destroying the current system, but in that case, I'd had no choice but to write something antagonistic towards the Church or the other countries.
And personally, just as I said earlier, I definitely don't want to antagonise the Church of Sacred Light or the other nations, so as much as possible I'd like to head in a direction that doesn't provoke them.

"Anri-sama? Are you still awake?"

"Tena…"

When I sighed at how I was making no progress at all, I heard somebody call me from outside the room. Apparently after Tena had put Lili to bed, she came to see how I was doing.

"Overly exerting yourself is bad for your body, Anri-sama. I think it might be better if you went to bed…"

"It's fine. You can go to bed, Tena."

"Anri-sama…"

It wasn't a lie. I'm still totally fine. For some reason after I turned into a divine, I stopped needing sleep. Staying up a few nights won't hurt my health at all. It's completely unrelated to physical fatigue.

"If you don't plan on sleeping yet, then could I trouble you for some tea?"

"Understood."

I know that as an apostle, Tena still needs to eat and sleep. Because of that, unlike me, she needs to properly rest. I'm happy that she's worried about me, but she needs to rest after she's done with the tea.

After she left a cup of tea in front of me, I was going to tell her to go to sleep, but before I could, Tena spoke to me first.

“Are you not making progress?”

Perhaps realising that I was troubled, Tena asked me that, and I nodded wordlessly. A situation where you keep crumpling up the pages and starting over can’t be called progress no matter how you look at it.

“What are you worrying about?”

“I can’t write something that endorses reform without picking a fight with the Church or existing countries.”

After saying it myself, the impossible requirements made my head hurt. The moment that you reform something, you’d be picking a fight with the people who currently had benefits, so to begin with it was contradictory.

“Umm, why is it that reform is necessary?”

“Why, you say? Well…”

‘Because that’s what the followers want.’ I was about to reply, when my mind suddenly came to a stop.
Is that really true?
It’s certain that there were lots of people amongst the followers that were in despair because of the Church or the class system. But if you asked me if all members wanted reform, then I would have to say that I hadn’t heard such a thing.
What the betrayed and wounded wanted was something more vague than that; ‘something righteous’. If that wasn’t true, then even without religion, they’d rely on something else in some other place.
And as for ‘something righteous’, there was no need to forcefully link it to reform. From the beginning, there was no need to touch on troublesome topics like the current state of the religions or countries in the world. As long as I state ethics or morals; state ‘the way things should be’, then that’s enough.

It felt like a ray of light shone into my mind that had been hazy from agonising over this.

“It looks like you’re fine now. It wouldn’t do for me to be a nuisance, so I’ll take my leave.”

Perhaps feeling relieved because she saw that I was fine, Tena gave a bow with a smile. I nodded back at her.

“Goodnight, Tena. And… thanks.”

“Good night, Anri-sama.”

Right. There was no need for me to put on airs.
In the end, the scriptures were just the basis, and not the entirety. You could tell this just by looking at the way the Church of Sacred Light spread. It’s fine just for me to write whatever I think. The religious stuff can just be left to the Pope and the rest to add on.

Mn. It feels like I can write now.
Pulling myself together, I turned to the page and began putting down my thoughts into words.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
<The Black Scripture>
An item designated as an ‘S-Class Danger’.
Said to be filled with the malice of the Evil God, amongst the things in this world, it is a cursed item of particularly great strength.
Those who have received this item will continue to suffer misfortune until they transcribe a copy and hand it to somebody else. Additionally, as even the copy contains the curse, it will propagate endlessly.
Additionally, there is no means of destroying this item.

A list of the misfortunes of the cursed lett… I mean, the “Black Scripture”:

You suffer a bald patch.
You experience “popping ears” when heading to high places.
It feels like somebody is pressing a finger between your eyebrows.
You contract hay fever.
You will suddenly suffer stomach pains in places where there are no nearby toilets.
Each morning you will awaken to a leg cramp.
You will unfailing stub your little toe on a shelf.
You will unconsciously blurt out your real opinion.
You will end all your sentences in ‘evilgod’.

Chapter 4 – Light and Dark

When I joined the Divine Race I conquered the curse, and so I was able to take long baths again.
Up until now the curse would activate if I didn't leave the bath before thirty minutes was up and send my clothes flying into the bath, so I always had to bathe while watching the time. Now I could finally bathe as long as I wanted.
Although I stopped sweating, I still got dirty, so I would usually bathe every day. More important than anything was the fact that getting into a hot bath was relaxing for the spirit, so it was essential that I did so.

"Phew…"

Feeling the heat soak into my body, I unconsciously let out a sigh. After pouring some water on myself, I dropped into the bath. Waves went through the bath, and the comfortable vibrations swayed my body.
I played around like that for a while, but because I had already been in for an hour, although I didn't get dizzy I still thought that it was about time to get out, so I stood up.

And when I did, a man in a crimson robe suddenly appeared outside the bathtub without any warning.
He was a tall man with long, light green hair, and although he had a handsome face, he looked somewhat ill-bred.

"Ahn?"

It was so shocking that I had forgotten to even hide myself and stood there stock still. In front of me, the man looked around the room, before finally noticing me.

"…"

"…"

We continued to stare at each other wordlessly for a while, but the man finally lowered his gaze just a little, before averting his eyes with a scoff.

imouto
Still silent, I fired a relatively serious shadow bullet at the man.

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After preparing an emergency meeting room and round table on the 5th floor, I sat down on one of the three chairs. The other chairs were occupied by the peeper who intruded on my bath earlier, and a blonde woman wearing a full set of silver armour. Incidentally, although the man took my relatively serious shadow bullet, he was left without a scratch.
Tena walked around the table and placed a cup of tea before each of us.

“Thanks. We’re fine now, so you can leave. Also, tell everyone not to come near this room.”

“Y-, Yes! Understood.”

Perhaps I accidentally let some of my urgency into my voice, because Tena leapt out of the room with great urgency.
I felt a little guilty, but considering the situation, it couldn’t help that I was nervous.

imouto
Not even in my dreams had I imagined that the 『God of Darkness』 and the 『God of Light』 would march in here directly together.

imouto
The man sitting to me left in a deep crimson sleeveless robe had introduced himself as Dark God Anbaal.
Whether his long green hair, or the bared chest beneath his robe, his appearance just made him look like a member of a visual kei rock band, but because of his bad attitude, crossing his legs on the table, I couldn’t see him as anything but a hoodlum.
He saw me naked in the bath. He looked at my chest and sneered. I already had a pretty bad impression of him. When I considered that this was the

deity that they worshipped, I began feeling sympathy for the Demon Race. I'll make sure to warn Leonora later not to be hasty.
But the feeling of pressure I was feeling was the real thing, so I had no doubts that he was a god. He was the god that ruled over "darkness" so considering the attribute of my shadow bullet, it made sense that he was unharmed.

On the other hand, the armoured woman sitting to my left who appeared in the bathroom to scold the Dark God for intruding introduced herself as the God of Light Sophia.
Her beautiful blonde hair was tied into three braids, and from her appearance she looked like a calm woman in her twenties, giving off a clean and serious atmosphere… but there's one thing I'd like to say.

Her appearance was way too different to the statue in the church; it's fraud. If something like this is allowed, wouldn't it be fine for me to change my clothes too?

I only saw it from afar, but I think the goddess statue in the church was wearing something like a nun's clothing. And in contrast, the woman in front of me was wearing a silver plate armour without a single gap, and no matter how you looked at it, she seemed like the martial type. She was like Joan of Arc. The fact that the person herself was quiet made things scarier instead.

Honestly speaking, I was less afraid of the hoodlum Dark God than I was of her. She didn't seem the type who understood jokes, after all.
In contrast, the Dark God was just acting tough and wasn't all that scary.
When I turned my gaze to him, perhaps he noticed my gaze because he looked my way.

"The hell you lookin' at?"

"A peeper."

Ah-, oops. I accidentally spoke my mind.

"Hah! You think you have anything worth peeping at?"

“That thin body and…” he said, before wordlessly looking at my chest. I reflexively wanted to cover up with my hands, but I felt like I would be the loser if I faltered here, so I just boldly glared back at him. But of course, perhaps I should be saying ‘as expected of a god’ because the mystic eyes had no effect at all, and he didn’t even flinch.

“To begin with, the heck is a god even doing in the bath?”

When I glared at him, he blocked my eyes like it was annoying, and said that. Well certainly I don’t have a metabolism, but that doesn’t mean that I don’t get dirty, so I thought it was obvious that I’d clean myself but… Do gods normally not bathe?
I mean, I’m fine with this peeper skipping his bathes or whatever he wants as long as he doesn’t come near me, but if gods don’t bathe, then could it be that she also…

“Anbaal, it seems she still hasn’t been released from a physical body. It’s natural that she needs to clean herself. Don’t think of her as the same as you and I who exist only as souls.”

The Light God cut into the conversation as though scolding the Dark God. And at the same time, she glared at me with an incredible glint in her eyes. Could it be that she knew what I was thinking about? Understood, Oneesama, you aren’t unclean.

“A brat with her shell still stuck to her arse, huh? Tsk, how annoying.”

The Dark God gave a languid sigh as though saying ‘my my’.
But still, I wonder what they meant. If I take the Light God’s words at face value, then these two were just spiritual beings without a body. Seeing them sitting on chairs and drinking tea made it a little hard to believe, but since there wasn’t any need for them to lie here, it was probably the truth.
But in that case, what kind of position did that put *me* in?
“If there’s anything you would like to ask, then I shall answer. Before we get into the main topic, it seems that you need to be informed of some background information first.”

“Guess it can’t be helped, ey. We aren’t getting anywhere at this rate.”

The Light God spoke to me who was having questions. I'm concerned about what her 'main topic' is, but for now I'll obediently ask my questions. It's dangerous to get into a conversation with people whose motives you don't know, but because I had so little information, I wasn't in a position where I could form any strategies.

"What's the difference between you two and I?"

I decided just to ask what I had doubts about just now.

"We are all the same in that we belong to the Divine Race. However, because the ones formed from the divided Creator God, Anbaal and I, were divines to begin with, we were always souls without physical bodies. And in contrast, because you were somebody who became a divine from a human, you still possess your body. Once your soul becomes a divine, your body will be affected as well though, so it isn't as though your body is the same as when you were a human though."

"Me and that overly serious woman over usually exist without possessing any substance, but right now we're materialised. But well, once your body is destroyed you'll probably be just like us though."

In other words, right now I'm like a half-baked half-divine with a physical body, but once my physical body is destroyed, I'll be a complete divine just like them? I get the feeling that we just casually skipped through a fairly heavy conversation.

"But well, even if you still have a body, you're still a divine, so there shouldn't be any problems with exercising your powers."

"Exercising my powers?"

Could it be that she's talking about the 'Administrator' skill that came along when I became a divine? I can't think of anything else that matches, so I think that's probably it, though.

"Yeah. That's the 'main topic' that we came aaaall the way here to talk to ya about."

The Dark God pulled his legs back from atop the table, and after fixing his posture, he put his crossed arms atop the table and leaned in. The sense of tension in the room surged up.

imouto
imouto
“Today the reason we came here… is to decide on our 『Authorities』.”

Chapter 5 – The Meeting Unfolds

“『Authorities』 are things that we Administrators govern… there are 『Authorities』 for all things, phenomena and concepts. And to us, the 『Authorities』 are our 『power』, 『responsibility』 and 『duty』.”

“Each Administrator has a main 『Authority』 with a bunch of 『Sub-Authorities』, as well as 『Free-Authorities』 that don’t belong to any, so that makes up all three types.”

The gods of Light and Dark explained to me about the 『Authorities』 that were their main reason for visiting me. I wanted to take down notes, but it wasn’t the right atmosphere for that, so I decided to try my best to memorise it.

“An Administrator’s main 『Authority』 can’t be changed ’cause of their attribute. I’m 『Dark』, that overly serious woman over there is 『Light』, and as for you… Seriously? 『Fear』? That’s a pretty nasty one you’ve chosen, ey?”

I didn’t choose it. I didn’t choose it I say.
I can assent to their 『Main Authorities』 being 『Light』 and 『Dark』, but I can’t accept that mine is 『Fear』.

“In exchange for very few being able to choose a emotion-type 『Authority』, they can gain faith through that emotion, you see. It seems that you are only absorbing the fear directed at yourself, though.”

It felt like something from people my followers was flowing into me, but that was the reason? Just exactly how feared am I?
…Mn? There was something concerning in her words just now though.

“Can I absorb fear directed at things besides me too?”

“Obviously. 『Authorities』 are the right to manage the world, yanno. As long as you use their function properly, no matter who it’s directed at, you’ll be able to use it as faith. But well, emotions directed at yourself don’t need any conscious work on your half, so I guess it’s that much more efficient, ey?”

I didn’t know. I didn’t know. I decided not to use my power as an Administrator because I had no idea what might’ve happened, but is that why? As long as it’s linked to ‘gathering faith'[filling my stomach] this is pretty important, so I’ll have a look at it later.

“Anyway, the remaining ones are 『Sub-Authorities』 and 『Free-Authorities』, but they’re decided among fellow Administrators. Mains and subs become the Administrator’s specialty, yanno?”

“A specialised 『Authority』 cannot be used by other Administrators. On the other hand, free 『Authorities』 can be used by all Administrators.”

“Then couldn’t you just leave them all free?”

“If that was all it’d be aight, but you can’t gather faith from free 『Authorities』. And if you can’t distinguish whose responsibility is whose, the response to problems gets slow, and it’s riddled with risk.”

I see. That’s why they’re 『power』, 『responsibility』 and 『duty』, huh? So in exchange for gaining 『power』, you gain as much responsibility in exchange.

“Having said that, if all 『Authorities』 are specialised, then there would be none remaining for other Administrators to use. As a result, those that have a high degree of risk are used as 『Sub-Authorities』, while the rest are left as free.”

“Anyway, here comes the main topic; up ’til now, all the 『Sub-Authorities』 have been split between me and her, but suddenly this new Administrator pops up. So we need to choose how to divide the 『Sub-Authorities』 again.”

I understand why they came as a pair now. It was to hold an important meeting about how the world would be from now on.

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With the general explanation finished, after brewing some more tea, the meeting resumed. Also, since I would feel bad about calling Tena to such a dangerous place, I steeped the tea myself. The two were making doubtful expressions, but I wouldn’t accept any complaints.

“Well then, guess we’ll quickly get to it. First of all, I’m taking 『Demon Race』. No discussions.”

“I too will not concede 『Human Race』.”

T-, The way this is going is… The so-called ‘taking-all-the-good parts-to-yourself-and-leaving-the-newcomer-with-the-remains-newcomer-bullying-scene’!?

Are they going to say stuff like
“『Goblins』 or 『Vulgarness』 would fit ‘a person of low birth'[an embarrassment to the divines] like you.” or *“You ain’t thinking that an accident like you could be on equal terms with us, right?”* to me?
They carefully explained various things to me so I let my guard down, but thinking about it, there’s no way that a human that messed up their territory by becoming a divine──although I didn’t wish for it──would be accepted by them.
But I can’t just take things sitting down either.
If I lose this power struggle, then it’ll also mean that this country will be looked down on by its neighbours. It’ll threaten the peaceful lives of Tena and the others too. I don’t want to recklessly abuse my influence, but I need a minimum amount of power as a foothold.

I need to be stubborn here.

“I won’t accept──”

“Leaving the rest to you.”

“I shall leave the rest up to you.”

imouto
imouto
imouto
──this?

imouto
imouto

imouto
“I do think that it is a difficult task, but I have faith in you.”

“Well, just see this as training.”

imouto
imouto
imouto
T-, These guys… They’re planning on pushing all the work onto me?
Right. Even if I take Leonora’s story with a grain of salt, they were a pair that didn’t care about the details as long as they were loved by their respective races. At the time, the conversation was about the Light God, but from what I can see it applies to the Dark God as well.
The Dark God called her overly serious, but just what part of this is overly serious?
Up until now, they’d be reluctantly working in order to protect their races, but now that there was somebody they could push all the work onto, they were planning to only take responsibility for the things they cared about, and were plotting to push everything else onto me.

This isn’t a joke.
I want the bare minimum power to prevent myself from being invaded, but I don’t want *everything* pushed onto me. What I want is to relax in peace; there’s no point if my schedule is so busy I’ll die.
I need to be stubborn here.

“I won’t accept this.”

“Ah?”

“Ah?”

I’m being glared at. As I thought, the Light God is scarier. But I can’t give up here.

“If you’re pushing all the other 『Authorities』 onto me, then I can also destroy the humans or the demons with 『Epidemic』. Are you fine with that?”

“————!”

“————!”

The moment I said that, the two gods stood straight up. I was being glared at just like before, but the pressure now was on another level.

“You have sure some guts, eh.”

The Dark God was gathering mana in his hands, but the Light God waved him to stop, and spoke to me.

“Did you say, that you would destroy the Human Race?”

“The fact that I’ll be able to is the problem. If one god has all the 『Authorities』, they’ll be unstoppable.”

“I see. So you wanted to say that there is a need for the three of us to be in balance. You have a point. However——”

The Light God stopped her sentence midway, before pulling out a massive sword as tall as she was, and slamming it into the table. A thunderous boom rang out through the room, and the round table was split in half.

“——the next time you speak nonsense like that again, I will destroy you.”

Scary… Yes, I will definitely keep that in mind.
I raised my arms face-height in surrender, before stating my defence.

“It was just an example; I have no intention of doing it.”

“I sincerely hope not.”

It seems that I somehow got her to sheathe her sword.
Of course, I never had any intentions of destroying the humans or the demons to begin with, and it was because there was that risk that I wanted to give an example of why we needed balance, but from now on I’m going to

be careful not to say anything stupid about messing with the humans in front of her.

I can sort of understand now why the Dark God calls her “overly serious”. But if she’s going to be serious, then I would’ve preferred her putting that into a different outlet.

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After repairing the bisect table──the one who broke it was the Light God, so why was I…?──we resumed the meeting.
However, the discussion dragged on and we didn’t make progress. Although I prevented everything being pushed onto me, both the Light God and Dark God were trying their best to push things onto somebody else. In the end, it became something like “Even if one of us does something destructive, the other two can just cooperate and stop them.” and we just kept pushing things onto each other.
If I relaxed I would’ve just gotten things pushed onto me instead, so I also objected, but because of that, we eventually fell into a completely unproductive cycle of pushing things onto each other.
The old and new, male god and goddess, positive attributes and negative attributes; a frenzied 2 vs 1 battle that continually changed positions continued on, and along the way we lost track of who was objecting to what anymore.
Because we didn’t need to eat or sleep, it just meant that the argument continued endlessly.

“Hahh… Hahh…”

“Huu… We are not making progress, are we?”

“Seriously, you two are freaking stubborn.”

Even though we didn’t even need to breathe, we glared at each other breathless.
I wanted to tell him that he was just as stubborn as we were, but as the Light God said, we weren’t making any progress.

“Alright. I’ve got an idea that’ll definitely decide things.”

“Hmm, please do say.”

“Or rather, if you had something like that then say it to begin with.”

Dark God. Shut up.
I only just thought of it, so it couldn’t be helped.

“We’ll have a match, and the winner gets to decide on how to divide things. However, with the balance between the three of us kept in mind.”

“Ohh? Ain’t that interesting.”

“I see. Even if we continue the conversation, there does not seem to be an end in sight, so I think that idea is fine too. However, just what kind of match will it be?”

Naturally, I have no plans on simply battling it out. It won’t be a game or anything either. It’s clear that I’d completely lose in both.

imouto
imouto
imouto
“The match will be… a dungeon.”

Precepts for having an efficient meeting; as learned by Anri-san.

1. Decide on the length of the meeting beforehand
“An endless meeting is dangerous.”

2. Make sure to have somebody in charge of the direction of the meeting.
“Without one, everything gets out of control.”

3. Make sure to take minutes
“If everything is recorded, you’ll be self-conscious and pay more attention to what you say… probably.”

Chapter 6 – On That Day, a Quake Ran Through the World

“Administration.”

I used my skill as an Administrator for the first time.
When I activated the skill, a menu-like window appeared before me.

Menu: Authority Activation
M*nu: Intelligence Perusal
M*nu: Divine Enchantment
M*nu: Divine Revelation
It was pretty simple for a god’s power, but considering my talk the other day with the Light God and Dark God, the power of the Divine Race is probably concentrated in 『Authority Activation』.
『Intelligence Perusal』 was just as the titles suggested, the ability to know about things that happened, and things that were happening. As you’d expect, even a divine wouldn’t be able to gather information on the future, and in the end the only information you could browse were on the past and present.
『Divine Enchantment』 was the act of handing out the power of a god to other people in the form of divine protection… but apparently it was no different from the Divine Enchantment skill. If I really had to say it, then apparently it wouldn’t bestow divine protection against my will, but I had no use for it anyway. In fact, I would prefer a way to undo the divine protections already out there.

And so, this time the one that I would be using was 『Divine Revelation』
──an ability for transmitting words to your followers.
It was honestly pretty dull…
No, I mean, if it’s the Light God or the Dark God then it might be an ability that transmits their words across the continent, but most of my believers are inside the temple, so there isn’t much point. I could use my powers as the dungeon master to transmit my will after all, and although I wouldn’t be

too keen on it, it wasn't as though I couldn't tell them directly either.
Actually, let me revise that; it isn't "there isn't much point" but "there's absolutely no point".
But well, even if there isn't, the other two gods are using Divine Revelation, so (although I'm not sure if I have any,) it's sort of an issue of dignity. That's why I had to take the same method.
I picked the middle entry on the menu and muttered,

"Divine Revelation."

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"What do you mean by "dungeon"?"

"I don't really get it, but you better not be talkin' outta your ass."

The two gods gave me extremely distrustful replies.
I know how they feel; right now I'm regretting it, wondering to myself what the heck I was saying. If I had to give an excuse, the meeting was *really* long, so I was mentally worn out.
But now that I'd already said it, it didn't feel like a situation where I could take it back. I'll force my way forward.
"Before I joined the Divine Race, I created a 31-floor dungeon, that still hasn't been conquered yet. If the humans conquer it, then Light God Sophia wins. If the demons conquer it, then the win goes to Dark God Anbaal. If it remains uncaptured within a certain amount of time, then it's my win."

It was just a random idea, but I think it sounds surprisingly good.
Leonora, and the Hero Party from a while ago; both were close to the strongest tier within their own races, and neither could conquer even half of the dungeon. I don't think a person that can conquer this dungeon exists in either race. Although, rather than pure ability, I'm talking more about the level of meatheadedness.
There's also the huge benefit of not fighting the Light God and Dark God directly. Since I'm lacking in direct combat experience, I'll be at a disadvantage no matter what, but if I use this method then my opponents will be the human and demon races, so my handicap mostly decreases.

“Ohh…? Ain’t that sound interesting.”

“You intend on involving the Human Race into our conflict?”

The Dark God seemed like he’d agree, but the Light God showed disapproval at my idea. Because the Human Race is something to be protected for her, so she probably wanted to avoid exposing them to danger due to her own circumstances. Well, the Dark God should be the same in that aspect, but I guess it’s just a difference in personality.

“It’s going to determine the management of the world, so it’s not somebody else’s business.”

“…I understand. Very well. I agree. Anbaal, how about you?”

“I’m fine.”

Alright, both of them are on board. What’s left is to figure out the rules in detail.

imouto
imouto
After that, we discussed things little by little, and worked out a set of rules. Unlike the discussion about the 『Authorities』 we had in the beginning, this conversation went much more smoothly.

imouto
1. *The match is in regards to who can conquer the dungeon “Holy Ground of the Evil God”. If the humans conquer it, then Light God Sophia wins. If the demons conquer it, then the win goes to Dark God Anbaal. If it remains uncaptured within a certain amount of time, then the winner is Evil God Anri.*
   In addition, ‘conquering’ is defined as being the first to touch the『Proof of Capture』 on the 31st floor.
2. *The winning Administrator gains the right to allocate the 『Sub-Authorities』. However, they will do so with the balance of all three Administrators in mind.*
3. *The length of the match is 1 year.*

4. *The use of『Authorities』 to directly aid or hinder the capture of the dungeon is prohibited.*
5. *During the duration of the match, Evil God Anri will not add additional floors.*
6. *During the duration of the match, Evil God anri will not summon additional monsters. However, a single dragon is permitted.*
7. *Evil God Anri will take all care possible that no fatalities will occur amongst the human and demon challengers.*
8. *Light God Sophia, as well as Dark God Anbaal will prohibit the Human Race and Demon Race respectively from committing acts of aggression or subversive activities against the Holy Anri Thearchy for the duration of the match.*
9. *Evil God Anri reserves the right to take an entrance fee from the challengers. However, the fee shall not exceed 1 silver coin per challenger, per challenge.*

"Such worldiness…"

"You a miser? Oi!"

I hear nothing.

"By『Proof of Capture』, you mean *that*? How do I say this… Your taste is pretty fucked, huh."
"It isn't like that by choice."

I stationed the『Proof of Capture』on a pillar-shaped pedestal that was in the first room that you arrived at, coming down the stairs from the 30th floor. I'd hate it for them to come into the residential area and mess everything up, so I'm planning on having them teleport outside after taking the『Proof of Capture』.

"You were awfully fixed on the dragon, but is there some kind of meaning to it?"

"Dragons are romance."

Various things happened causing me to put it off, but since I had plenty of mana, I wanted to summon the dragon that I'd been dreaming of seeing.

And also, it wouldn't be good for the dungeon's image if there was no boss for the 30th floor.

I'm kind of getting the feeling that their gazes are getting more and more lukewarm, but it's probably my imagination.

Also, it's set in the rules that nobody is allowed to attack or commit subterfuge against us in the confusion. It'd be troubling if they came and invaded after pretending to be here to challenge the dungeon, so it was also a necessary clause, but with this, I was able to postpone the establishment of the country as well. When it comes to creating a nation, I honestly don't think a 1-year grace period is anywhere near enough, but we don't have many people, so we should probably be able to get things together to an extent.
Also, the fact that the Light God and Dark God also acknowledged us as a country is probably going to be really meaningful in our international relationships from now on.

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Through the revelation, I spoke to every believer in the country.
About the Dark God that most humans weren't aware of. About the power struggle that had begun between the Light God, the Dark God, and myself. About how in relation to that, people from various countries, as well as the demons would be coming here to challenge the dungeon. And about how our citizens were not to harm the challengers.
Also, I decided not to go out of my way to touch on the fact that our 'power struggle' was closer to pushing our workload onto each other. The other two were ordering their races to capture the dungeon with Divine Revelation, and I'm pretty sure they did the same.

It wasn't in the rules that my citizens couldn't harm the challengers so they technically could, but I can't say I'd approve of that, so I decided to forbid it. I'd be troubled if their actions ended up as a dispute after all, and more important than anything was the fact that this was our chance as a nation.

Now that they had been directly instructed by their gods, the humans and demons were probably eager to challenge the dungeon. Since my dungeon

fundamentally kicks out the fallen, it's possible to challenge it again. In that case, it would be natural for challengers to live near the dungeon in order to challenge it. The nearest town is Riemel, but if there was an even closer place to stay, there wouldn't be any reason not to use it. If we open up inns near the temple, I'm sure we'll have customers.
I plan on taking the weapons, items and money of the losers just as I've always been, so if I open up a shop, and a storage store, I'm sure they'll be popular. The products for the store can just be things that we've taken from them.
It might also be good to sell maps of the dungeon floors, and periodically change things up. Adding floors was forbidden in the rules, but modifying existing floors shouldn't be a problem. It depends on the pricing, but I should be able to expect a certain amount of income.

Indeed; this match is a chance to acquire foreign currency.
Or rather, to our nation that doesn't have a major industry, if we don't do something like this we'll never be able to be anything more than a self-sufficient village, no matter how much time passes. The management of the country I'm going to leave to Pope and the others as always, but letting this wonderful chance escape would be a terrible move.

That's why at the end of the revelation, I finished with these words:

"From now on, our nation is to promote tourism as a "Dungeon Town"."

Chapter 7 – Dungeon Restart

Ever since the revelation the other day, we began constructing the town around the temple again as a matter of urgent priority, and I was busy maintaining the dungeon that I had left alone for a while.
Ever since that day that I became the Evil God, not a single person has come to invade the dungeon with the temple built on top. It's not like I deactivated anything, so in that respect the dungeon was still ready for people at this very moment, but since I may as well, I decided that I would perform maintenance on various things just in case.

Now then, with that as the preface, although this may be a little sudden, I'd like to change to the event that I've been waiting for.
Indeed. It's time for the much awaited dragon summoning.

Dragon──the symbol of the strongest being that stands at the top of the fantasy world. Sometimes as the strongest enemy, sometimes as the most reliable ally, sometimes as the god that rules the world – though the position may change, the dragon is written as the strongest.
A majestic body and sharp fangs. Tough scales and claws that can tear apart any matter of being. And finally, great wings fitting of the ruler of the skies. With just one breath, they can blow apart a great army, and are sometimes able to make free use of even powerful magic. The strongest monster, the dragon, is such a being.

You can roughly split them into the lizard-like western dragons, and the snake-like eastern dragons, but it really has to be a western dragon, I think. I think there are all sorts of dragon fans, so there might be people who disagree, but at the very least, right now I'm the one doing the summoning so I'll choose the way I like.

imouto
Or so I was faintly thinking, as I performed the preparations for the dragon summoning.

It's a dragon after all, so I'm sure it'll definitely be huge.
It might be a little dangerous to summon it in the office where the dungeon core is. The truth is I made that kind of mistake during the summoning for the 20th floor's orichalcum Living Armour, and I have bitter memories of having the room half-destroyed. I won't make the same mistake again.
Instead of the immobile main core, I held the portable subcore and teleported to the 30th floor boss room to summon the dragon. Even if I summon it somewhere else I'll have to teleport it here anyway, so it saves time just to summon it here to begin with.

imouto
The room has been the same ever since the day that I met with Leonora here. The throne is human-sized and unsuited to the dragon I'm going to summon, but I'll think about changing the room after the summoning to match it.

"Dungeon Create."

I muttered so with the subcore in my hand, and a window appeared.
I chose the "summon" entry from it, and from various monster categories, I picked "dragon type". And when I did, a list with various pictures of dragons and their parameters appeared. Fire dragons and water dragons and earth dragons and wind dragons – I felt like grinning just by looking at the lineup, but I worked hard to keep cool.
Since I'm going to summon one anyway, I'll go with the strongest. Since the day I became a divine, my mana's just been piling up without any chance to use it, so I can pick whatever dragon I want. It was possible to sort the list by the amount of mana used, so I looked at the one with the biggest value…
How cool. He looks strong. I'll go with him.

"Summon Dragon."

It's not like I needed to say that, but it just came out of my mouth.
When I began summoning, a gargantuan magic circle of 20m diameter appeared in front of me. When the magic circle flickered, an enormous amount of magic gathered above it, and space seemed to warp. And then, something giant began to show itself from that warp.
That giant being let out a roar before my expectant eyes.

“PIKYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!”

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Why did this happen.
There’s no better way to word my feelings. I just stood there dumbfounded, gazing at the tragedy before me.

A majestic body and sharp fangs. Tough scales and claws that can tear apart any matter of being. And finally, great wings fitting of the ruler of the skies. A dragon with all of these things was cowering in a corner of the room, hiding its face against the wall. Literally the Japanese phrase, ‘covering your head and leaving your bottom exposed’.

Black Dragon Vardneel.

500,000,000 mana points; an amount that surpasses just plain harassment, and is at a level where you just lose interest in summoning him to begin with. The most powerful and wicked dragon that had materialised in exchange for that ridiculous amount of mana let out a screech the moment he appeared on the magic circle, and as good as dashed away from me like a startled hare.

Mn, it’s not as though I didn’t have some faint idea that this would happen. Lately I’ve only been talking to humans and demons, as well as divines who it didn’t work on at all so I totally forgot about its existence, but the description for the Evil God Aura skill certainly did say “has enough power to send a dragon running frantically”.
I acknowledge this. I acknowledge this, but it really is cruel.
Even though I’ve been looking forward to this… always looking forward to this…

I was even uncharacteristically excited while daydreaming about what would happen once the strongest dragon had my divine protection. But looking at him, it seems completely impossible that he’d accept me from the heart. And in fact, just taking a step forward from where I was standing had him tremble with a start, and frantically press himself further up the wall to escape.

Ah-, he's finally showing his belly.
Don't want. I don't want the strongest dragon's submission pose. I'm begging you, so don't destroy my yearning towards dragons any further.

No matter how I thought about it, staying here wouldn't better the situation at all, so in disappointment I left the room.

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Instead of returning to the office, I just teleported to the temple on the 5th surface floor.
There are plenty of things that I needed to do besides the dragon summoning, but I'm feeling really discouraged.
Laying down on the canopy bed in my room, I hugged my pillow and buried my face in it.

"Anri-sama?"

Hearing a lisping voice call out to me, I… had a look without looking that way. Apparently Lili had been in my room reading a book. She's sharing a room with Tena, but lately Tena's been busy and can't look after her, so Lili's been spending a lot of time in my room. I didn't notice she was here, so I showed her something a little uncool.
I got up and was about to turn to Lili and reply, when I hesitated because I had no idea what to say.
Perhaps she noticed because Lili closed the book she had been reading, and then trotted up to me from the table.

"Anri-sama, what's wrong? Are you sad?"

Apparently she realised my depressed atmosphere.
She asked me that while patting my head, so my eyes grew a little hot.

"It's fine, there was just something a little sad."

I soothed Lili, and patted her chestnut hair back. Lili narrowed her eyes comfortably.
I was finding Lili's actions lovely, when I suddenly noticed that she still had

her collar, and unconsciously frowned.
She hasn't been blessed with my divine protection the same way Tena has, so she's still a human. That's fine in and of itself, but the problem is that she's still a slave. When I became a divine, Tena joined the Apostle Race as well and was freed from her slave status. I considered that the same thing might happen if I gave Lili my divine protection as well, but there's the possibility that apostles are immortal, so I was hesitant to change her at her current age.
If I can learn to use my 『Authorities』 decently, then I think I'll be able to release her from being a slave without changing her from a human, but it's impossible at the moment.

I removed my eyes from her collar, and spoke to her after changing gears.

"Are you studying, Lili?"

"Yeah, I was reading the book."

"Good girl. I'll read it out to you."

"Really!?"

It would probably be better as study for her to read a book herself, but just a little bit as thanks for cheering me up should be okay.
Finding it charming that Lili's eyes were glittering in excitement, I nodded in reply. It feels that my heart that had splintered from that shocking event was now being healed.

"What kind of book were you reading?"

"This."

Lili held out the book that she had been reading.
I looked at the title of the book.

『The Girl and the Dragon』

No more.

Chapter 8 – Invaders, or Rather, Customers

『Welcome!』

There are various dungeons across the world, but there is probably none that welcomes people with such a line.
If there was, then it would be plenty reason to question the sanity of that world's inhabits.

Incidentally, the invaders, or rather, customers haven't reached the dungeon yet. What awaits them is a trial of ambushing assassins that block their way. Using my power as an Administrator, the Intelligence Perusal, I was peeking o-, I mean, observing them.

『Mister, I recommend our inn!』

『No, come to ours!』

『We've got cute girls!』

『Weapons, armours, we have everything! Please come to our shop!』

『You're missing medicinal herbs!? You mustn't go to the dungeon without being fully prepared!』

『If you leave your things with us, you can fail in the dungeon without a problem! The storage store is this way!』

『Won't you buy a map? without this the dungeon will be quite hard, you know!』

Indeed; the assassins known as touters.
Before they reach the dungeon, the challengers are exposed to the mad scramble for customers by the workers at the inns, shops, and storage stores in front of the dungeon. At this point, 9 out of 10 will drop out. Well, I

say drop out, but it's not like they die or get seriously injured or anything. They're just a day late to the dungeon.
But still, these salespeople are all really formidable merchants. Are they really Evil God followers? Or could it be that I overly motivated them with my revelation the other day?

The small fraction of challengers that make it past the iron willed assassins, as well as the people that folded and come a day late can reach as far as the temple that serves as the entrance to the dungeon.
Hearing the words 'Evil God Temple', most people would be pretty cautious, but we don't have gatekeepers or anything, and the doors are wide open. However, lurking by the door are the second round of assassins.

And right now, a victim… Ah, my tongue slipped. Sorry, a new challenger had freshly arrived. And as though completely natural, the second round of assassins appeared before then.

『Do you believe in Anri-sama~!?』

『OWAH!? W-, who the heck are you.』

It was a blonde haired man in luxurious priest's clothes… the Merry Pope Harvin. Any head of state should be really busy, but whenever new guests come, he often appears.

『Anri as in… the Evil God? Of course I don't believe in something like that!』

Hearing his reaction, I basically thought "Well, yeah." but the Pope looked up at the sky like it was the end of the world.

『Oohh, what sin! Anri-sama! Please grant these pitiful lambs your mercy.』

『Who the hell is a pitiful lamb!』

Please what?
By the way, this is a bit of a digression but this is his fifth time screaming

those words today. There have also only been five batches of challengers today. And each time, the Pope had grieved like it was the end of the world. The challengers all yelled angrily at his words, but he wasn't moved at all.

『I present this to you. A precious scripture copied personally by my hand. Please read this and learn of Anri-sama.』

While saying that, he took out a single book and handed it to the challenger. The man took the book by reflex, and accidentally accepted it.
…Indeed. He accepted it.

『The heck is… Wai-, UOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!? Ain't this the Black Scripture? What the fuck have you done!』

Apparently the infamy of the scripture that I wrote is already well-known throughout the other countries, and so the man realised what had been handed to him. Once somebody accepts the cursed scriptures, they continually meet with misfortune until they transcribe a copy and hand it to somebody else, and apparently through this method, the scripture was already slowly spreading through the surrounding nations. …It's a book of morals on how to live properly though.
When I showed Leonora the stuff I had written, the curse kicked in, which was how this whole thing started, but since I really do feel sorry for causing misfortune to befall others for no reason, I at least made sure to have the rules properly added onto on the back. Thanks to that, everyone immediately knew how to cope with it, and the recognition of the scriptures as a dangerous object quickly spread.
But still, just how many copies has he written. This is almost the 20th book he's taken out of his pocket, today alone.

『I'LL REMEMBER THIS YOU FUCKERRRR!!!』

Leaving behind a clichéd line, the challenger ran out of the temple with the scripture in hand. I'm sure he's gone to grab the things he needs to write a copy.
And like that, through the second round of assassins, the challenger who had finally made it to the dungeon dropped out as well, and once again,

today the “Holy Land of the Evil God” continues to boast of being impregnable.

imouto
imouto
…Wai-, isn’t that bad? How is anything going to get done if everybody gets driven off at the entrance.
It’s great that the dungeon is impregnable and all, but I’ll be troubled if the guests give up and never come again. The first round of assassins──the touters──are fine since they’re just slowing them for a day, and aren’t driving them away. But the second round is no good.

“Divine Punishment.”

I teleported the tray from atop the table, to high above his head… right above it.

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『Haha, I truly apologise. I was a little too eager in my missionary work.』

I was conversing with the Pope across the screen, who now had a lump on his head. I’m thankful for his missionary work, but the way he’s doing things is terrible. No matter how you think about it, far from converting them, all it’s going to do is make them more hostile. Well, it might make them more fearful, so I might gain some faith through that instead though.

『Proselytising is fine, but chasing them away is forbidden. Rather than aiming for them when they come, it would be better to go for them when they leave.』

『I see! In other words, it would be easier for them to accept you after they experience your mighty power, Anri-sama. I am in much admiration of your wisdom.』

No, that’s not what I mean but… Well, whatever.

imouto

『Have all the visitors been human?』

『Yes. At the very least, I have not seen any demons that have made it as far as the temple.』

I asked the Pope about the challengers thus far, but apparently he hadn't seen anybody from the demon side yet.
But I had predicted this to an extent. Where we are now was originally part of the Human Territory, so it was enemy territory for the Demon Race. If a large number of them came here at once, there would be the chance of the neighbouring countries overreacting, so the demons have no choice but to proceed with caution.

What's more, looking at Leonora, the Human Race and Demon Race look basically the same. They don't have horns or wings or anything. I asked her before, but at best you can only tell them apart through hair and eye colour. If they're mixed, then the characteristics would average out, but as two races that were created as enemies, romantic relations between the two are pretty rare, so we should be able to tell them apart. But well, apparently thanks to taking in Summoned Heroes and the like, they're gradually becoming mixed though.

My biggest worry would be a fight between humans and demons arising in the temple or the surroundings, but at the very least it doesn't seem to be a worry at this moment in time. Having said that though, the Dark God set off the demon side as well, so this peace definitely won't last forever. We need to stay on alert.

『Got it. I'll continue to leave it to you.』

『Yes, understood. I shall convert them without fail.』

『No, like I said…』

『Oh, my apologies. I was to do so once they left, wasn't it.』

Will things really be okay?

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“Fumu. It is quite delicious today as well.”

“Huhu, we have plenty, so please do ask for seconds without reserve.”

“Nom nom.”

Tena and Leonora were off early for once, so Lili included, today we were able to eat together. Lately we’ve all been busy and haven’t been able to eat together, so it was a precious chance to do so.

“I see. It truly is delicious, isn’t it.”

“Hmm, ain’t bad, ey.”

“Y-, Yes! T-, Thank you very much.”

…If it wasn’t for these guys, that is.
why are they even here, these two gods. Even though they apparently didn’t need food, they’re sneakily eating ours. What was pitiful was that Tena was quite nervous.
Incidentally, Leonora’s been sitting next to the Dark God and bravely tending to him, while Lili was sitting on the Light God’s lap and being fed. The Dark God is unsociable, but wasn’t unkind to Leonora… It really is the chest huh. Is it her chest?
Leaving the jokes aside, the Light God was pampering Lili alone, and the Dark God was being kind to Leonora, so it was probably due to the patronage of their respective races. Their attitude towards Tena and I was clearly different. I don’t think it would kill them to be a little kinder to us though.

“What is the matter?”

“Hahhn?”

Perhaps because they noticed my gaze, the two of them spoke to me.

“Why are you here?”

“I’ve already given instructions to the Demon Race, so all that’s left is to watch em. So ain’t it better to be close then?”

“I am the same. And also, if I watch over them from up close, when it comes time, I will be able to save the lives of the challengers as well.”

Hang on a moment.
I get that you want to watch over the match from up close since it’ll determine everything from now on, but I can’t ignore that.

“…Are you going to be here the whole match?”

“Of course.”

“Ain’t it obvious?”

Can’t you go home?

“Is there some problem, Anri?”

“Anri-sama?”

Guh-, Leonora and Lili have been taken by the enemy.
I looked towards my final ally, Tena.

“…”

“…”

The silent conversation we had, 『Do something.』 『That’s impossible.』 was decided in an instant.

If the followers of the Sacred Light Church and the members of the Demon Race knew that the Light God and Dark God were staying in the Evil God Temple, I wonder if they would go insane.

While pondering things in a state close to escaping reality, I gave a deep, silent sigh.

Chapter 9 – They Came Back

『Is this really… the dungeon from that time?』

『There shouldn't be any mistaking the location, but…』

『I'd heard the rumours, but it really is shocking, huh?』

『It really was a dangerous place, ey?』

Through the Intelligence Perusal screen, I saw the party of four sidestepping the touters with noncommittal replies, before looking up at the temple.
An ikemen swordsman with short blonde hair, a bishoujo nun, a voluptuous mage oneesan, and a swordsman with a good body.
Indeed. The slab thieves came back.
…Sorry, I meant, the Hero Party.

imouto
Back when I was still a human, they invaded the dungeon, and reaching as far as the No Life King's boss room, they challenge… nobody, because they turned tail and went home; the muscle-brained Hero Party. Even though I had wondered when they would come challenge the place again, in the end they went off somewhere, but it seems that right now they were planning on tackling the dungeon a second time.

"These guys are your representatives?"

"Yes. Aside from the relevation to all of the Human Race, I also gave them a mission through the Sacred Sword."

I asked Light God Sophia who was sitting next to me and looking at the screen as well, and she replied with a smile. I could see how much she trusted them through her expression. Certainly, they are the most talented amongst the people she has to move. I don't know if he's the only hero, or if

there are more of them, but I don't think there's any doubt that they're the pinnacle of the Human Race.
Considering that all the other challengers have collapsed before the 10th floor, I can agree that there isn't much point if the challengers aren't at least their level of strength.
But having said that, as somebody who knows how the last time went down, I just can't understand how she can be so confident in them.

"They didn't come even though all sorts of crazy stuff happened, so I thought they went on a journey somewhere, but?"

"Yes, they entered the Demon Territory and made it close to the Demon King Castle."

"Yeah, basically to the front door after all, yanno?"

Even though they were about to challenge the last boss, you called them back here? How ruthless.
As somebody who became a hero through the "Sacred Goddess-sama's" divine protection, he probably couldn't refuse a direct request from her.

『But still, to think that you got a direct request from Sacred Goddess-sama, ey?』

『Yeah, she told me that this was even higher priority than then Demon King Subjugation, so it's probably pretty important.』

『More important than the Demon King Subjugation… it's pretty hard to even imagine, huh?』

『It was Sacred Goddess-sama's esteemed words, so I think it must be a deep and thoughtful plan that we can't even imagine.』

It's true that it's important, but somehow I'm really starting to sympathise for these guys.

Name: Arc
Race: Human Race

Sex: Male
Age: 26
Job: Swordsman
Level: 41
Title: Hero of the Holy Sword

Name: Zio
Race: Human Race
Sex: Male
Age: 28
Job: Swordsman
Level: 35
Title: None

Name: Frey
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 24
Job: Mage
Level: 35
Title: None

Name: Widdi
Race: Human Race
Sex: Female
Age: 20
Job: Cleric
Level: 34
Title: None

I decided to try having a look at their statuses. As you'd expect, I don't remember the details from last time, but I do recall that Arc's level was in the 30s, so there's no doubt that they've levelled up.
That was just how many fierce battles they had overcome to reach the Demon King, and just as they were about to challenge him… they were called back. When I imagined their hardships, it felt like tears were going to fall.

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The Hero Party didn't overlook last time's failure, and came completely prepared for camping, smoothly advancing as far as the 10th floor. But they've already reached the 10th floor once before, so this much was within my expectations. The issue is what happens from now on.
Will they finally overcome the puzzle that defeated them last time? Holding my breath in anticipation, I watched them reach the pedestal.

"What is that pedestal?"

"It's a puzzle used to open the path to the 10th floor boss room, and unless you collect the stone slabs and put them in, the door won't open."

"Ahh, I see…"

When I answered Light God Sophia's question, Leonora who was sitting beside me, face-palmed. Speaking of which, she spent a whole hour on this too, huh.
Incidentally, Dark God Anbaal wasn't here today.

『…? Hasn't the inscription changed from last time?』

『You're right, Frey. Although the latter half is the same as previously, the first half has changed, hasn't it.』

『Yeah but more important than that is how we're gunna get it open, right? How's the Holy Sword, Arc?』

『Give me a moment… I see. Apparently we just need to collect the stone slabs hidden on this floor and fit them in.』

!?

Hearing the unexpected conversation from beyond the screen, I let out a gasp, and turned towards Light God Sophia. And when I did, she averted her eyes. From what I saw, I immediately understood.

…This woman leaked the information she heard from me through her revelation.

“You cheater.”

“I am hurt. Giving advice through revelations was never forbidden.”

Certainly, it is within the rules. Using 『Authorities』 is forbidden, but we never forbade the use of relevations. But that doesn’t change the fact that it was unfair.

But still, this might be bad. I underestimated them because I thought that these muscleheads wouldn’t make it past the mid-floor puzzles, but if Light God Sophia supports them then it’s a different story.
With an Administrator’s Intelligence Perusal, they can look at all the information in the world, so with her help, the Hero Party will break through the puzzles in an instant.

Wait, hang on?
Then why did she go out of her way to ask me? If she knew how to solve the puzzle, then she wouldn’t have asked a question like that. In other words, even if she could see the puzzle itself, she didn’t know how to solve it.
In that case, as long as I don’t tell her the solution, the usefulness of her advice will become limited too.

“I’m not giving you any more hints.”

“That is a shame.”

Light God Sophia replied with an expression that didn’t seem to think it was that much of a shame at all. But well, she probably wasn’t so optimistic to think that my tongue would slip over and over after all, so I guess she was just trying to make a gain at the beginning.
It’s also a fact that even without clear answers, just having a third party’s advice should lower the puzzles’ difficult a lot.
I had thought that the middle layer’s puzzle floors would hold out for a year, but now the lower floors might have their turn too.

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After an hour of touring the 10th floor to collect the slabs, the Hero Party returned to the pedestal. The four members had a slab each, and were lined up in front of the pedestal.

Mn? Four slabs?
Why are there four? I should have only placed three of them.
Ah-, could it be that they continued to take care of that one slab that they ran away with last time? I've already changed the marks and replaced the slabs as well, so the slab from last time isn't any use through.

『Now then, shall we put the slabs in already?』

『Yeah, in these three holes… Huh?』

『We have four slabs, but… Where does everyone else think the last one should be placed?』

『There doesn't seem to be any other place to put it, huh.』

Apparently the Hero Party also noticed the odd number of slabs, because just as they were about to put the slabs into the pedestal, they began looking for another place to put a slab in instead.
Of course, there isn't any such place.
Seeing them search every corner of the pedestal without finding anything, and even beginning to search the inside of the room made me want to hold my head. And then, as though it were natural, Arc began to hold the pommel of the sword to his forehead. Probably looking for Sacred Goddess Sophia's advice.
Looking at this, once they go to the middle floors, won't she be stuck guiding them the entire time? It feels like I can see a large sweat drop forming at the back of her head.

"Sophia, tell them to exclude the slab from last time."

"Anri!?"

"…Are you fine with that?"

Hearing my suggestion, both Leonora and Light God Sophia raised voices of surprised. It's true that I was taking back what I just said, but they were just so slow that I couldn't bear to watch any longer. And what's more, the fact that another slab was mixed in was unexpected, so there wasn't any hint either, which is why I think just this much follow-up is fine.
Also, it isn't as though I don't gain anything from having them advance forward. Seeing whether or not they'll be able to defeat the 10th floor boss should serve as a reference for how our match will go from now on. Or rather, I really don't want to let them get away a second time.
It definitely wasn't because I felt sorry for her when I saw her flustered at how to answer.

"Understood. Then I shall take you up on your words, Anri."

After Light God Sophia advised Arc through a revelation, he explained the situation to his companions before throwing away last time's slab and placing the remaining three into the pedestal.
Hey-, just because you don't need it now, doesn't mean you should just throw it away there. Won't that just confuse other people?

The Hero Party unknowingly left a confusing gift for the future latecomers, before stepping through the newly opened doors to the throne room. I'd better take that slab back later, or else…

Chapter 10 – The Black Tyrant

“Thee who wouldst come in challenge of the Black Tyrant, arrange correctly the stars.”

Just as the new words said, waiting for them inside as they stepped into the throne room was the Black Tyrant──

『GUOOOOHHHHHHHHHH!!!』

──Black Dragon Vardneel.

The roar from his giant frame was enough to instil physical pressure, and assaulted the Hero Party. With an overpowering strength that pressured you just from being there, he was truly befitting of the word ‘tyrant’.
…I would have really preferred that you showed that majesty before me too.

『A-, A dragon!?』

『What size!』

『No good, everybody please take your formations!』

『It’s coming!』

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“Anri? Wasn’t the boss of the 10th floor the No Life King?”

“I switched them.”

Since Leonora knew who the old floor boss was she asked me that question, but the answer was really simple. I thought about it for a while after the dragon summoning, and I decided to switch the dragon to the 10th floor. But it couldn’t be helped, right? After seeing the dragon lay belly up, there

was no way I would want him to guard the 30th floor that's basically our final stronghold. I'm sure anyone else would feel the same.

Incidentally, I kept the enchanted Orichalcum Armour as the 20th floor boss, and moved the former 10th floor boss, No Life King, to the 30th floor instead. Well, perhaps it would be more accurate to say the former No Life King. After he received my divine protection, he ended up evolving into something else.

"What a thing for you to have summoned! That is Black Dragon Vardneel… The wicked dragon said to bring calamity to the world!"

"Mn?"

Light God Sophia asked me that with a frantic expression, but I just reflexively tilted my head in question. I don't know about "bringing calamity to the world" but I *did* choose the one that needed the most mana points, so I suppose it shouldn't be surprising even if he had such an anecdote. Well, it isn't surprising, but at the same time thinking about how he's been ever since I summoned him, I just can't match him with the image from the anecdote.
To begin with, why is she even so panicked?
He certainly does have high specs, but it's nothing that a divine can't handle.
"He shouldn't be so strong that an Administrator can't handle him."

"That may be true, but just how many casualties do you think will come about until we stop him!"

I see. I suppose it's quite like her to be worried about harm to the Human Race.
But…

"As long as he's in my dungeon, there won't be any damage."

"……Ah."

"Now that Anri mentions it, he doesn't seem like he'll be able to leave, either."

Right. Just like Leonora said, Black Dragon Vardneel basically can't leave the dungeon of his own power. No, rather than leaving the dungeon, with that huge size of his, he can't even leave the room. As for ways for him to leave, it's basically just having me teleport him. As you'd expect, it really would be too pitiful to keep him locked in the room forever, so I was thinking of taking him out on walks on occasion, but even if I did take him outside, I wouldn't be letting him roam wild or anything.
So there really isn't any need to worry about casualties.

"…"

"…"

"…"

An awkward silence filled the room. Light God Sophia's face was slightly red. Now that she's calm and has a proper understanding of things, she looks embarrassed about how panicked she was just now.

"It seems that the battle is about to begin."

Ah. She changed the subject.

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Frey blasted flames at Black Dragon Vardneel's face, who was flying about with a nimbleness unsuited for his size. Because of the magical resistance, there was basically no damage, but as you'd expect he probably couldn't ignore a direct flame to the face, so his speed lowered just a little. With that opening, the four of them avoided his direct attack. In the next instant, his large frame flew through the area that the Hero Party had just been standing. Had they not retreated, they would have been sent flying and probably taken massive damage.

『Eat this!』

Before the Black Dragon turned around to face them, Zio slashed his sword down on Vardneel's shoulders. However, a metallic **-KIN-**rang out, and the sword was easily repelled.
『Tsk, how tough… Oop.』

Perhaps irritated at the slash despite the lack of damage, Vardneel swept his foreleg across, and Zio immediately jumped back to evade.

『Doesn't look like my sword can cut him, ey?』

『Then how about my Holy Sword!』

With the foreleg now in the open after its attack on Zio, this time Arc slashed at it with his Holy Sword. Unlike Zio's, the Holy Sword wasn't repelled, and cut into the Black Dragon's scales, splashing just a little blood.

『GYAOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!』

『I managed to cut him, but he really does have amazing defence, huh.』

The Black Dragon screamed in pain, before snapping its sharp fangs at Arc.

『Like I'd letcha!』

Zio hit the Black Dragon in the face with his shield this time, as it was about to bite at Arc. There was no damage, but being hit from the side had changed the course of its bite, and its jaws closed without catching Arc.

『Thanks, you saved me!』

『No worries. It doesn't seem like I'll do any damage, so I'll focus on harassing it. You concentrate on attacking with the Holy Sword!』

『Got it!』

Zio threw away his sword, and held the shield in both hands, whilst beginning to hit the Black Dragon's attacks to harass it. With the openings that Zio created, as the only one who could do damage, Arc cut at the Black

Dragon. The backline supported with flames, and they slowly but surely damaged Vardneel.

But perhaps growing impatient at them, Vardneel took in a deep breath, and roared. Together with the roar came an explosive wind pressure that assaulted the Hero Party.

『GUOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!』

『UWAHH!?』

『Ku-, SHIT!』

Last time there had been a lot of distance between them, so the roar had only broken their postures, but this time they had taken it at point-blank range. Arc and Zio were blown away with ease, and smacked into a wall a few metres from where Frey and Widdi were.

『Arc-sama!?』

『Zio!?』

Frey and Widdi ran up to them, and began healing them with medicinal herbs and recovery magic. Giving the Hero Party a sidelong glance, the Black Dragon began to take an even deeper breath than before.

『I-, It can't be…』

『A dragon breath!?』

Frey and Widdi both grew pale, but with Arc and Zio collapsed, they couldn't avoid it. With determined expressions, the two of them began chanting magic.

『————————————!!!』

From the large jaws of the dragon flew a black flame wreathed in purple lightning. Frey had used fire magic to try and reduce the damage of the

breath even a little, but her fire magic was swallowed by the gargantuan flame in an instant. Widdi had deployed a barrier around them to protect them, but it showed only a meagre resistance, before being smashed to pieces by the dragon breath.
It seemed that they were in dire straits after being enveloped in the dragon breath, but Arc and Zio had recovered enough to throw themselves at Widdi and Frey respectively, to try and put even a little distance between it.
The dragon breath collided with the floor that they had been on just a moment ago, and the four of them were blown away by the shockwave.
Although it was a shockwave, its power was tremendous, and after being slammed against the floor, although their lives were not in danger, they could only groan, unable to stand.

On the other hand, the Black Dragon turned towards them, and began leisurely drawing near.

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“O-, Oi… Isn’t that bad, Anri?”

“Anri! At this rate, they will be!?”

“It’s fine.”

Watching the screen, both Leonora and Light God Sophia were frantic. Light God Sophia had even drawn out her greatsword, and from her expression it seemed like she was about to jump in any second now. Calming the two of them, I sent my voice to the other side of the screen.

『Vnee, sit.』

The response was dramatic, and Black Dragon Vardneel who had been walking towards the fallen Hero Party──pet name Vnee, immediately sat down on the spot, with a proper posture.

“Heh?”

“Hah?”

Both Leonora and Light God Sophia let out stupid sounds and stiffened, but I decided to ignore them for now, and created a magic circle to teleport the Hero Party out of the dungeon. After confirming that they had been sent out without issue, I turned around and found Leonora beginning to dogeza. She had grown used to averting her eyes from mine, but because she was distracted this time, it seems that her reaction was slow.

"What was what?"

"Even if you ask me that…"

Light God Sophia spoke to me, still in a daze. But there was no way to respond except that it was the fruits of my training.
Unlike undead and living armours, Vnee is a living being, so naturally he needs food. I'm the one that feeds him, but since I was going out of my way, I decided that I may as well try my hand at training him. Each and every time I went to his room, he would dash away into the corner of the room, but we *have* become close enough that he'll respond to my commands now. For now I've managed to teach him "sit", "down", and "wait". "handshake" would crush me, so I'm not going to do that one.
"You… are treating the most wicked dragon as your pet?"

"Well, it's Anri after all."

For some reason both Light God Sophia and the no-longer dogeza-ing Leonora gave tired sighs.

I wonder if I should give Vnee a collar.

imouto
imouto
…Ah-, I forgot to collect the Hero Party's items and money.

TL:
1) *I occasionally replaced 'Black Dragon' with Vardneel, because it's a lot more awkward sounding in English. To begin with, we need a 'the' all the*

time.
2) Vnee is read as ‘vu nii’.

Chapter 11 – The Kings That Sit in the Four Heavens

“『Hmph, so this is the temple of the Evil God or whatever, huh.』

A new challenger stood at the entrance to the temple. That in and of itself was something that happened every day and wasn't particularly noteworthy, but the challenger this time was different to all the others.
He was a fearless-looking man with short pointed hair, and a large build, but he had characteristic silver hair and red eyes were just like Leonora's… the characteristics of the Demon Race.
The believers in the temple had apparently noticed as well, because unlike with the other challengers, they watched him from afar. Because of their contact with Leonora, the followers had become more or less used to the Demon Race, but as you'd expect, it was different with somebody they'd never seen before.

Name: Ijido
Race: Demon Race
Sex: Male
Age: 31
Job: Mage
Level: 26
Title: None

I checked his status, but he really was a demon after all. And what's more, there was a part of his status that concerned me.

“Aah, so they've finally come, ey.”

“Nu… To think that it would be him of all people.”

With something at the tip of my mind, I tilted my head in wonder, while Dark God Anbaal and Leonora reacted next to me as they watched the

screen. Leaving Dark God Anbaal aside, I was worried about Leonora's unpleasant expression.

"Do you know him?"

"He is one of the Four Heavenly Kings, but he has always been courting me, you see."

So they had them too. The Four Heavenly Kings.

"What kind of people are the Four Heavenly Kings?"

"Mn? You want to know about the Four Heavenly Kings? My father, His Majesty the Demon King has a great many subordinates, but amongst them the most powerful four high-class demons are called the Four Heavenly Kings. Each of the Kings govern a different element; that man──Adamantite Earth Fiend Ijido is 『Earth』, you see."

By the four elements, does she mean earth, water, fire, and wind? Even if she says 'govern', it's not like they're divines, so she probably means that they specialise in magic of that element.

"The others are 『Wind's』 Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, and 『Water's』 Bloodfrost General Vikuto. It seems that this time only Ijido came though…"

"? Isn't that only three?"

Since they're called the Four Heavenly Kings, and she said they governed the four elements, you'd expect there to be four of them, but she only named earth, water, and wind. It's weird that there isn't a 『Fire』.

"No, umm… me…"

"Huh?"

Mii? That's the name of the last King?

“Like I said, the last one is me… The one that governs 『Fire』, Magic Flame Princess Leonora.”

Leonora replied in embarrassment. Speaking of which, aside from darkness magic she was good at fire magic too, wasn’t she.
The Demon King’s daughter is a Heavenly King? It seems abnormal that a member of the royal family is a subordinate though.

“So you were one of the Four Heavenly Kings. From now on I shall call you Magic Flame Princess Leonora.”

“I’m begging you, so please don’t. It’s pretty embarrassing.”

Seeing Leonora turn red in embarrassment made me feel like bullying her a little, but if I went too far she might hate me, so I decided to be prudent.

“And so, just how strong is he?”

A while ago I saw that his level was about the same as Leonora’s, but I wanted the opinion of somebody who actually knew his strength.

“He is on par with me, but since he’s of the earth element, I suppose I should say that he’s focused on defence. If we fought one on one, I would probably win. The personality doesn’t match, but he is somebody who can show his true worth when paired up with somebody who excels in offence.”

Right, when I looked at his status earlier there was something gnawing at me, but I finally know what it was now… His job.
Leonora is a magic boxer, and is an all-purpose type that is fine with both physical combat and magic. Because she was somebody who could play both frontline and backline, she was able to do something as amazing as conquer the dungeon solo.
But in contrast, the man on the screen was a mage… It doesn’t suit his second name of Adamantite Earth Fiend or whatever, but if you think about his job alone, then he should be somebody in the backline. Thinking about it normally, it doesn’t seem possible for him to solo the dungeon.
I was wondering if he had some secret trump card, but from Leonora’s explanation, that didn’t seem to be the case either.

“What kind of magic is earth magic?”

“Unlike fire and water magic which 『bring forth』 phenomena, earth and wind magic mostly 『manipulate』 things that already exist. For earth magic, the ground, and for wind, the atmosphere; that sort of thing, I suppose. The primary method of combat for earth magic is cladding the caster in an armour of rocks, creating shields form the ground, and creating golems from earth I suppose.”

I see. A magic that displays its power best when fighting on the ground, huh. It seems like a skill that would make the choice of battlefield extremely important. But in that case, there’s something that I’m confused about.

“The dungeon is created by bricks, but can you use earth magic on them?”

“It’s probably impossible.”

“……”

With Leonora stating so clearly that it was impossible, I didn’t know what my next words were supposed to be.

“Supposing they were normal bricks, then I think it would be possible, but the ones in the dungeon are fundamentally indestructible you see. It shouldn’t be possible to manipulate using earth magic. If it was a dungeon made from the bare earth then he might be able to make do though.”

In other words, doesn’t that mean that he’s completely useless in this dungeon? He’s a mage so he isn’t suited for close combat magic, and he can’t use anything except his specialty earth magic.

“He is also a demon, so although I haven’t seen him use it, he should be able to use darkness magic as well. Only, many of the monsters in this dungeon are undead, so the effect of darkness magic is weak. Well, honestly… isn’t it impossible for him?”

He *is* technically a coworker, but for her to say that so easily… You must really hate him, huh, Leonora. It felt like my face was going to spasm, so I

was trying to keep myself expressionless, while I turned to Dark God Anbaal instead.
“Didn’t they pick the wrong guy?”

“Ahh? Like I know. All I did was tell the current Demon King to go conquer the dungeon. I didn’t say a thing about who to send.”

In other words, the Demon King──Leonora’s father made this kind of selection? You’d expect him to be able to grasp the ability of his direct subordinates, but why did he do something like sending such an ill-suited person? If the Four Heavenly Kings are equal, then he could have just dispatched one of the members with abilities suited for conquering the dungeon.
Searching for an opinion, I once against turned to Leonora, paying careful attention not to look her in the eyes.

『Shitt, WHY!? WHY ISN’T MY MAGIC WORKING!?』

“Fumu, Esteemed Father’s intention, you ask…? Let’s see, perhaps he wanted to sacrifice the most useless guy.”

I get the feeling that Leonora’s remarks are ununsually poisonous today.
Just what kind of courting did he do?
But if calling him a sacrifice means that there’s something to be gained through this, then I have to wonder. Honestly speaking, it just looks like they don’t have any intention of seriously conquering this dungeon but…
Wai-, could it be that I was right? If the demons weren’t assertively trying to conquer the dungeon, but were instead just acting like they were fulfilling their duties by sending in one of the Four Heavenly Kings, then I can assent to this.
It’s true that considering the details of the time that I became a divine, the Demon Race should be quite afraid of me, so it might be natural that they can’t quite get into conquering this place. I did half-destroy a mountain after all.
But Leonora… if that’s true, then you making that remark here is a big problem, you know.

“So what? That guy decided to ignore my instructions or something?”

“Eh-…!? T-, T-, T-, That would be unthinkable!”

Right – if the demons aren’t assertively trying to conquer this dungeon, then they’re going against Dark God Anbaal’s orders. Hearing his words, and realising this, Leonora immediately turned blue.

“Then what?”

“Eh-, ah-, umm… Right! It’s scouting! It may be true that it is impossible for that guy to conquer this place, but he was sent here as a scout in order to raise the chance of victory for the main force sent later on!”

While panicking and wiping her cold sweat, Leonora somehow managed to give an excuse to Dark God Anbaal. I get the feeling that she had so much vigour that it felt less persuasive instead, but she probably doesn’t have the composure to think about that right now.

“Well, that’s fine then.”

I’m not sure if he was just overwhelmed by her vigour, or if he actually bought it, but Dark God Anbaal accepted her words and backed down.
It’s unclear what the Demon King was really thinking when he sent Ijido here by himself, but now that she made that sort of declaration to the Dark God, they’ll need to invest some real war power into a later force if they want to prove to him that they weren’t disobeying.

『GUAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!?』

Ah-, the small fry got done in.

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『Hmph, I was just coincidentally on my off-game yesterday.』

Who on earth is he even making his excuses to?
Ijido who had easily collapsed yesterday, had come the next day to challenge the dungeon again. Normally a fallen challenger takes a while to rest, so I couldn’t help but admire his sturdiness.

Also, unlike yesterday when he challenged the dungeon, this time Ijido was accompanied by 10 earthen dolls of about his size. They're probably the golems made from earth magic that Leonora mentioned yesterday.
Certainly, even if you can't use the ground in the dungeon, you can solve the problem by using magic before you enter it. He probably also reflected on his failure yesterday, and came up with some sort of plan.
But still, I didn't expect to see the this feat of controlling 10 golems at once. As expect of one of the Four Heavenly Kings, perhaps I should say. If he can produce golems from the earth without end, then leaving aside when he's inside a dungeon, it's easy to imagine that he's quite a powerful combatant outside.

『Hah! If I can just use my magic, then a dungeon like this is a piece 'a cake.』

"It's impossible. He might be able to use magic, but his mana won't hold if he continues to use it. At best, he'll just run out of mana on one of the floors and come to a stop."

As usual, Leonora immediately cut him down. Seriously, what the heck did he do? I'm a bit scared to ask, but I really do want to know.

"It seems like you hate him quite a bit, but what kind of courtship was it?"

"'What kind of courtship', huh? He said stuff like 『Be my woman.』 while looking at me with filthy eyes, and touching me all over the place, you see. I dealt with it, but honestly speaking I was unbearably angry."

Sexual harassment, huh… It's true that I can't think of that fondly either. But still, Leonora is the daughter of the Demon King. He has some guts to do something like that to a member of the royal family. I guess you can call him quite a big-shot in a way.

『Gufu-…』

Ah-, looks like he's already run out of mana. That was unexpectedly fast.

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『It was all just a test up 'til now. This time I'm serious.』

Today, he managed the achievement of challenging the dungeon three times in a row. I don't know whether I should praise him, or whether I should be astounded. He started saying things that sounded like a child's excuse, but honestly, what the heck is giving him all this encouragement?
Also, in exchange for yesterday's golems, this time he had a big sack on his back, and looked like Santa Claus.
I was wondering that on earth he had in there, but the answer to my question was made clear once he encountered some monsters.

『Hah! Eat this!』

Throwing out the contents of his sack, a large amount of earth spread out. And then, after his chant, the earth rose up into a humanoid form. I see. Yesterday his mana wouldn't hold because he was always manipulating the golems, so this time he's going to carry it when he isn't using it? It's a simple idea, but it does seem like he'll be able to maintain his mana this way. It's super simple though. And also uncool though.

"Anri! I need a favour!"

As I was watching Ijido's moving struggle, Leonora threw open the door and entered the room. Livid with anger, it was like anger was coming out from her entire body. And then, when she say Ijido on the screen, that flared even more violently.
Leonora clamped her hands on my shoulders, and without making eye contact, glared strongly at me.

"I need a favour. Smash that guy to the bone."

Owowowow!? Hey-, Leonora, you're gripping me too hard.

"Did something happen?"

It seems that she hated him to begin with, but today was too different than all the other times so far. Wondering what was up, I tried asking Leonora.

“I asked my homeland you see, but apparently if Ijido manages to conquer the dungeon, then Esteemed Father would accept our engagement.”

I see. Is that why he’s been so abnormally fired up? If not only you could obtain the woman you wanted, but on top of that could obtain the political power from marrying the Demon King’s daughter, then I can understand why you would be desperate.
I can only think of the Demon King’s statement as something he said with full knowledge that it was impossible, but it seems that in her anger, Leonora lost the ability to judge things calmly.

“As somebody born to the royal family, I have no intention of denying a political marriage. I won’t deny it, but even so, what I hate I hate, and I can’t imagine that marrying that guy will benefit the country. So please, stop that guy.”

Putting even more power into the hands on my shoulders, I heard creaking noises. I wouldn’t be able to bear with my shoulders being broken like this, so I nodded again and again in panic until I somehow got her to release me.

Even if I left him alone, I don’t think that he’d be able to conquer the dungeon, but I need to do something to make Leonora accept it as well.
Steeling my heart, I took out a single book of scriptures, and teleported it in front of him.

『Mn? The heck is this?』

Namu.

Wind: “Ijido fell, huh.”
Water: “Hmph… He was the weakest amongst all four of us.”
Fire: “Not even making it as far as the boss is a shame to we demons… Or rather, he isn’t dead, you know. He’s just worried about his bald patch, and hiding away somewhere.
Personally, I would be grateful if he stayed there forever, though.”

Chapter 12 – A Moment Before the Storm

The next day, the regrettable Heavenly King became a new victim, and the odd lull in dungeon capturing continued. Of course the normal customers were constantly coming, but special challengers like the Heroes or the Four Heavenly Kings weren't coming. As expected, the difficulty level of this dungeon was apparently too high for normal adventurers, because not a single person made it to the 10th floor.
To begin with, the very first condition of challenging this dungeon is having some way to deal with the miasma, so from that point alone the number of challengers was limited. Apparently dealing with this dungeon's level of miasma is difficult unless you're a fairly experienced cleric.

Although, I can't imagine that the Light God and Dark God will stay quiet like this, so it would probably be better to consider this the calm before the storm.

And since I had some time to relax and calm down… I noticed the problem:

imouto
imouto
Why on earth am I even having this match?

I had wanted to avoid having all of the Administrator work pushed onto me, but the moment that we agreed that balance was needed, it wouldn't have really been a problem if I had a little bit more work than the others. No, rather, once you consider this country, having more influence would be better, so you could even say it would have benefited me to have a bit more. But instead, I went too far with reflexively pushing back onto Sophia and Anbaal, and everything got confusing. Thinking about it now, it was just needless effort.
But still, I really would hate having everything pushed onto me, and still want to win if possible. Thinking about it, I might have quite a large side of me that hates losing. At the very least, I still have no intention of giving up my win.

Only, since things have finally calmed down, I decided to deal with a number of things that I'd been neglecting.

imouto
First of all, what I wanted to do before anything, was change my clothes. Even though I finally escaped from the equipment curse, I was told by Leonora that as the symbol of a religion, I shouldn't change my clothing too much. Because of that I've continued to wear the same clothing.
But considering how different Sophia's real clothing is compared to her statue, I started to think that it wouldn't really matter even if I changed, so today I decided to change my clothes.
And while I was at it, since I wasn't using my tantou either, I left it aside and decided to keep something less crazy with me for self-defence.
…I only realised afterwards that after an hour, it would transform from the blessing anyway.

After it was bestowed my divine protection, the clothing changed into a jet black shoulderless dress with black rose decorations; a design that was a little bold and adventurous for me. I had wanted to wear something other than black once in a while, but after the divine protection, it just changed to pitch black again. I'm pretty sure that my clothes would change to black no matter what the original colour was, so I had no choice but to reluctantly give in.
For self-defence, I had chosen a fan to replace the tantou.

"Status."

Name: Anri
Race: Divine Race
Sex: Female
Age: 18
Job: Administrator
Level: 1
Title: Evil God of Fearful Trembling, Dungeon Master, Third Administrator
Mana: 42039845
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)

– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.9)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.9)
– Item Box (Lv.9)
– Dungeon Create (Lv.7)
– Administrator (Lv.5)
Equipment:
– Fan of Calamity
– Dress of the Black Death Rose
– Babydoll of Depravity
– Scanties of the Succubus
– Pumps of Darkness
Miko:
– Tena

Mn, it properly changed. …Mn?
It's been a while since I last looked at my status, but I get the feeling that the mana points have gone up quite a bit. Could it be that a god's mana points rise and fall with their faith? I can't think of anything else that might have caused my mana points to rise, so it's hard to think of it as being anything else.
I'm not going to care about the names of the fan and dress anymore, so I'll leave that alone.

imouto
"It matches you, Anri-sama."

"Fumu, not bad."

"It suits you, Anri."

"Anri-sama, so pretty."

Since I finally got to change, I went and showed everyone, and all of the girls gave me a positive reply.

"————Heh."

As expected, Anbaal looked a certain part, and snorted in ridicule.
I expected as much from him, so I'm not really that angry.

"Oohh, how splendid. We must let the world see your esteemed form. Right, since this is a wonderful occasion, let us construct a statue of you the height of the temple!"

Please don't.

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The second thing that I had wanted to do was change the settings for my 『Authorities』.
Sophia and Anbaal told me before that if I set my 『Authority』 of "fear" correctly, then I could gain faith even if the fear wasn't directed at myself.
I'd been busy with various things and never got the chance to try it, but it *is* something important linked to the fullness of my stomach, so I want to collect faith from as many avenues as possible.
"Administration."

When I activated the skill, the same menu as last time appeared.

Menu: Authority Activation
M*nu: Intelligence Perusal
M*nu: Divine Enchantment
M*nu: Divine Revelation
Thinking "Authority Activation" in my mind, another window appeared.

Main : Fear
Sub　: Undefined
Free

In the 『Main Authority』 column it had "Fear", and since I didn't have a 『Sub-Authority』 yet, it was undefined. Since there are a lot of 『Free Authorities』, that's probably why they didn't show it here.
I chose the "Fear" under 『Main Authority』, and the display changed.

Faith Collection: Inactive
Emotion Adjustment

Apparently there were only two things I could do with the “fear” Authority. Speaking of which, I do get the feeling that Sophia mentioned how emotion-type Authorities couldn’t do much.
Going by the name “Emotion Adjustment”, I suppose I can increase or decrease the “fear” emotion. That’s fine in and of itself, but the problem is the range of targets.
If you consider Administrators as the administrators of “the world”, then if I stupidly tamper with it there’s the chance that I’ll mess with the emotions of every living being in the world. Just one mistake could turn the world into a dystopian hell of terror where everyone is controlled by their emotions, so I decided not to mess with it.
Right now the important one is “Faith Collection”. Since it’s inactive right now, that’s probably why I’ve only been getting the faith from the fear directed at myself.
I changed the status of the Faith Collection.

“…?”

I had expected that I would immediately feel full after changing it, but there was basically no change at all. No, I mean, it does feel like it increased a tiny bit, so I can’t imagine that it was a failure. What’s going on? Even though I was supposed to be able to collect faith from all the fear in the world, why is there so little cha-… Wai-, it can’t be.
No, no, that can’t be.
I’m sure there’s some mistake.

It can’t be that “to begin with, almost all the fear in the world was directed at me” right? That can’t be. If it was, then I’m confident that I would feel more depressed than ever since coming to this world.

imouto
Well, although I said ‘since coming to this world’, thinking about it again, I haven’t ever been depressed since being tossed into this place. If I had to find *something*, then basically just the time with Vnee.
Normally you’d want to go home after being forcefully sent to another

world, but strangely I never felt homesick. Thinking about it, even before I became a divine, I get the feeling that I almost completely stopped thinking about my old world──
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For some reason thinking about it made my head hurt, so I changed gears, and dealt with the third thing that I had wanted to do.

Number three was dealing with the two gods that had continued to stay in my temple; Sophia and Anbaal. Although I say 'dealing with', I had given up on driving them out on the very first day, and I can't imagine they'd be admirable enough to pay rent either. To begin with, they probably don't even have money. So instead, I decided to make them useful some other way.
The most valuable thing they have is their influence. Because the Light God had revealed to the public the existence of the Dark God, as well as the fact that the Evil God was a completely different being, the headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light, the Luxiria Theocracy, suffered a major blow. What's more, the Origin Faction that originated in the Kingdom of Fortera began to spread through the neighbouring countries as a result. Also, even if Sophia is interested in the prosperity of humanity as a whole, she isn't interested in the disputes within the religious factions, so apparently she wasn't thinking of intervening.
As for how to use their influence in the best way for this country, it would probably be the mediator between the other countries. Even if it's obviously impossible with the Luxiria Theocracy, if it's the Kingdom of Fortera who declared neutrality, even having diplomatic relations would be possible. For the demon side, right now we aren't hostile to each other, and since there's a link thanks to Leonora as well, if the Dark God certified it, then the possibility of dealing with each other normally is high.

"And so, mediate for us."

"I am fine with that, but…"

"So troublesome."

It seemed like Sophia would cooperate, but Anbaal made an unwilling expression. But apparently he just found it plain troublesome, and wasn't against the idea of mediating itself.

"It's the hotel fee for staying here."

"Tsk, aight, aight. I'll tell em."

Alright. Diplomacy GET. At least, that's the plan.
The Human Race and Demon Race are enemies so they can't deal with each other directly, but they might be able to trade through us. There are probably lots of things that you can only get in either territory, and as long as there isn't any hostility, there would probably be merchants who would want to trade too.
We'll probably get a great profit margin as the middleman too.

"Speaking of which, there's something I'd like to ask you, Sophia."

"Ask me? What is it?"

"Would it be possible for you to get rid of Lili's slave status?"

I had thought that perhaps I could get rid of it myself once I had the right 『Authority』, but then I realised that Sophia could do it immediately.

"Release her from her status? As I have the 『Authority』 for the 『Human Race』, it is possible."

"If possible, I'd like you to remove it."

"I see… I understand. Very well. The master does not seem to be anywhere in sight, so this should not trouble anyone, and I like her as well, so I shall do so afterwards."

That's great. I think one of my problems has been solved.

"Yanno, you said that your believers think that you ate this brat, yeah? If they think she's dead, then the master ain't gunna complain. But still…"

“What?”

Anbaal looked my way with a meaningful expression.

“Nah, I was just thinkin’ that considering you’re a man-eating god to them, it’s surprising that your followers haven’t run away.”

“…”

I can’t deny it. Normally people would be scared about being put in the same cage as a man-eating tiger.
But well, the only one who speaks to me directly is the Pope, so maybe the other followers don’t really feel a sense of reality about me, so they don’t feel the danger.

As for the Merry Pope, far from being scared, I get the feeling that he’s say “It would be the acme of honour to be eaten by you, Anri-sama! Please go ahead, and enjoy me from wherever you please!” or something.
I’m not going to eat him, okay.

Chapter 13 – Immature

Apparently the calm before the storm has ended.
The opening to the storm began with a party of 6 challengers invading the dungeon. In terms of numbers the party size was a little large, but by no means were they the biggest yet. But this was definitely my first time seeing a mixed human and demon party. Specifically speaking, it was a party of 3 humans, 3 demons, with 3 male demons, while the human side had 2 male and 1 female.
Because one of the humans was a person I'd already seen two times before; Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc, I felt it odd that his party members had changed and inspected their statuses. What I found were shocking names. Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel, and Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine.

…To think it would be an all-Hero party.
Incidentally, Lionel was a frivolous looking young man with long blue hair, braided only on the left, whilst Orlaine was a girl with light purple hair that came down to her shoulders.

Starting to get a bad feeling, I checked the demon side, and as expected, the names on this side were all big-shots as well.
The 『Wind』 member of the Four Heavenly Kings, Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, along with fellow Heavenly King of 『Water』, Bloodfrost General Vikuto. Finally, Demon King Eligor Romariel.
Living up to the name 'knight', Renarve was a calm young man with short silver hair, whilst Vikuto was a long-haired intellectual-looking man with monocle, and an air of hidden cunning to him.
And the man whose identity was obvious from a glance at his title… A rough looking older gentlemen, the Ojisama who was both Leonora's father, and His Majesty the Demon King. In regards to the fact that he was a short-haired man with a good build, he was the same as the regrettable Ijido from the other day, but the difference in presence was obvious.

An impossible party with three Heroes, the Demon King, and his two close associates; there's basically one thing I want to say about this.

“So immature.”

“It ain’t against the rules.”

“We just used revelations to gather them, after all.”

I know. I don’t think it’s breaking the rules or anything. That’s exactly why I called it “immature”.

“It isn’t against the rules, but the winner is the one who gets their hands on the 『Proof of Capture』. Even if it’s a mixed party, only one of them can be the winner.”

“We understand this. However, nothing will begin unless the dungeon is conquered first.”

“Once they get to the 30th floor, they can just decide the winner among themselves.”

I see. So since they thought that at this rate nobody would be able to conquer the dungeon, until the party passes a certain number of obstacles, they’ll be temporarily working together? In the end they’ll need to battle it out to decide on the 『Proof of Capture』, but until then, it makes sense that they would join the strongest of each faction together.

“But the atmosphere kind of dangerous, you know.”

I called it a 6-man party, but they were separated into the Hero side and Demon King side, and were currently glaring at each other. Rather than calling that a party, I can’t see it as anything but enemies.

“Ahhh… Well, cause they’re Heroes and the Demon King, yanno. Something of that level can’t be helped. I *did* give them the order not to quarrel until they captured the dungeon though.”
“They are mortal enemies after all. As you would expect, it cannot be hoped that they would get along.”

Well yeah, that's true. You can't expect the Heroes and the Demon King to get along. If it was a Summoned Hero with no ties to this world then the story might be different, but they were all Orthodox Heroes. The situation was that they were just barely working together, if unwillingly, because of the orders from the two gods.
In terms of ability, they're at the top of the humans and demons in this world, but I think they'll need teamwork to conquer the dungeon.

Finishing my conversation with Sophia and Anbaal, I looked towards the one other person here.

"Is that your dad, Leonora?"

"Yeah, that's right. My father, as well as His Majesty the Demon King. I heard that the main force would be coming to conquer the dungeon, but to think that Esteemed Father himself would be…"

Apparently Leonora hadn't heard either that the Demon King himself would be coming here.

"And the other two are the Heavenly Kings I heard about earlier?"

"Yeah, 『Wind's』 Fierce Gale Knight Renarve, and 『Water's』 Bloodfrost General Vikuto. Renarve is a knight serving as Esteemed Father's Royal Guard Captain, while Vikuto is the Prime Minister in charge of government affairs."

"So they have jobs outside of being the Four Heavenly Kings I see. What about you, Leonora?"

"Me? I am away from the country at the moment, but I serve as Esteemed Father's assistant. However, in my case, rather than doing my job, the meaning is closer to learning the things required for when I succeed the throne myself."

Speaking of which, she was the next Demon King, wasn't she. In that case it isn't strange that she was learning about that sort of stuff while she was young.

While thinking about that, I suddenly remembered the last Heavenly King who hadn't been mentioned yet.

"What about Ijido from last time?"

"Farming and civil construction."

It's amazing how different the level of intensity is. No, I mean, I get that it's important too, but the feeling of misplacement amongst "Royal Guard Captain" or "Prime Minister" or "Demon King's Aide" is no joke. Well, he's apparently bad at everything except earth magic, so I suppose it can't be helped though.

"Speaking of which, all these important people just left the country, but is it okay?"

"…I'm sure that Esteemed Father has taken that into account… probably."

Will things really be okay?

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Being the Dream Team if nothing else, the progression down the floors was faster than any other party so far. The divine protection of the three Heroes blocked the miasma, and the demons had high resistant to it to begin with, and so it presented them no problem either.
Additionally, although the Hero side and Demon King side were conquering the floors together, they never spoke once. The tension in the party was high, and I could tell that sparks were flying within the party even from beyond the screen. However, Lionel alone paid no heed to the atmosphere, and continued to make moves on Orlaine.

『The room up ahead has a dragon. Be careful.』

They reached the 10th floor in no time, and since Arc already knew the trick to the stone slabs as well, they managed to open the door without hesitation.
Perhaps because Arc had already told the party members about the dragon,

when they entered the room they prepared for combat without surprise. But as usual, the Hero side and Demon King side were not really cooperating, and each side took up positions one side of the Black Dragon. Rather than a party of 6, they were closer to two parties of 3, each attacking from either side.

『Let's go, Lionel! Orlaine!』

『Yeah, leave it to me.』

『Please leave the support to me.』

The Hero side had Arc on the frontlines, Lionel as the middle, and Orlaine in the backlines as support.

『Do not fall behind, you two.』

『Understood, Your Majesty.』

『Please leave it to me.』

On the other hand, Ojisama was on the frontlines, Renarve was playing the hit and run, whilst Vikuto was playing backline support.
Up until now, Ojisama had been mowing down enemies barehanded, but now he had summoned a black greatsword in one hand, and had the other hand wreathed in flames. Just like how Leonora was a magic boxer specialised in fire magic, her father was probably a magic swordsman with fire magic.

『Shall we test the waters? Take my strike!』

He lightly held the greatsword clad in flames with one hand, and running up to the dragon he struck it. The force of his attack was incredible, and the Black Dragon that should have had the overwhelming size advantage was sent flying back a few metres.

『Falling behind him would be a shame to we Heroes!』

『How very… true!』

With Ojisama's one mighty blow, the battle began. The backline support Orlaine and Vikuto fire a light and ice arrow respectively, and through the gaps created by the middleline Lionel, Arc and Ojisama attacked. The Black Dragon tried to put up a fight with its claws and fangs, but Renarve played his role in attacking it when it did, and cut down its attacks. Renarve was said to govern over wind, but rather than using his wind to attack, he instead seemed to primarily use it to support his movement and bring the speed of his sword to the extreme.

『As long as I am here, I shall not allow you to point your fangs at His Majesty!』

『Not bad, Renarve. I cannot lose to you.』

imouto
Although the Hero and Demon King sides weren't cooperating with each other, it seems that splitting into two groups and attacking from both sides was effective because the Black Dragon was confused with how to cope, and was helplessly toyed with.

『The roar is coming, fall back!』

『Got it!』

『Kuh-!』

『Too weak!』

The Black Dragon seemed to fire a roar in panic, but seeing through the preparation of the roar, Arc, Lionel and Renarve retreated and took almost no damage. Far from being hurt, they immediately closed the gap and took advantage of its opening to attack. As for Ojisama, he never even flinched and swung his greatsword face on.

『Now!』

『There are openings everywhere!』

On top of that, the mouth that the Black Dragon had opened to roar had light and ice arrows fly around into it from the back.

『GUGYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!?』

Receiving the painful attack, it screamed. It swung its limbs and tail around in rampage, but there was nobody here weak enough to be struck by its attacks of desperation, and the result was that it was attacked even more.

imouto
The Black Dragon gradually weakened, with bloody wounds everywhere. Because of the earlier arrow attack, the insides of its mouth was wounded, and now that it could not even use its trump card, the dragon breath, it already had no chance at victory.
So even the dragon lauded as the most powerful and wicked dragon was at a disadvantage against the impossible dream team of the Heroes and Demon King, huh. …No, perhaps it was largely because of the battlefield. Had the place been outdoors, then there wouldn't have been any way for the Heroes and Demon King to deal with its one-sided aerial attacks with its dragon breath.
That he wasn't able to make use of his strong point because of the dungeon was my failure.

imouto
imouto
imouto
『…Enough. You can stop now, Vnee.』

I couldn't bear to watch the wounded Vnee anymore, so I told him to stop. The thundering room immediately became quiet.
Arc and the others stopped their attacks as well, and looked around the room.

『Let them through.』

After saying that, Vnee stood still for a while, but he eventually moved into the corner of the room and stared at them in silence.

『That voice, could it be the Evil God?』

Ojisama asked that question, but I didn't reply, and just remotely opened the doors that were supposed to open once the boss was defeated.

『Go ahead.』

Hearing my words, they looked at Vnee for a while, but perhaps giving up, they eventually began heading to the stairs.

『Let us go. The road ahead is long.』

『Understood.』

『It feels somewhat uncomfortable stopping halfway but… I suppose it can't be helped.』

imouto
『Time for us to go too.』

『Yeah.』

『That dragon won't attack us from the back or anything, right?』

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"With this, the first barrier has been broken, hasn't it."

"Finally a third done, ey? Looong way to go."

"Hmmmn, am I supposed to be happy here or sad…"

Seeing the mixed party head to the 11th floor, Sophia and Anbaal let out sighs of relief. In contrast, Leonora seemed to have some complicated feelings towards it.

“Sophia, if possible I’d like you to heal Vnee.”

“The Black Dragon? Well, I do not particularly mind.”

Hearing Sophia give the OK, I felt relieved inside.
With undead or living armours they could recover once I poured mana over them, but as a living thing, I needed healing magic to heal Vnee. Since I can’t use anything but dark magic I couldn’t use healing magic on him, but if it was Light God Sophia then I thought it was possible.
I forced him to do something unreasonable, so I want to heal him quickly.

“Well then, I shall heal him.”

“Please.”

When I left it to her, her figure disappeared and then appeared onscreen.
Seeing Sophia suddenly appear, Vnee growled in vigilance, but Sophia paid no heed, and used magic after raising her hand towards him.
As you’d expect from the magic of a divine, even though Vnee had been that badly injured, he was completely healed in almost an instant.
While Vnee was bewildered at having his wounds healed, Sophia turned her back to him and teleported back to the office.

“It is done.”

“Thank you.”

I gave my thanks to Sophia who had spoken casually. In fact, she helped me out quite a bit. Had she not helped me, I wouldn’t have had any other method except using a lot of medicinal herbs to make medicinal soup, and then force-feed the stuff to Vnee.
When I told her this, both Sophia and Anbaal’s faces cramped.

“Please desist in your pet abuse.”

“That’s seriously harsh, yanno.”

“Anri, how about being a little kinder to him.”

I'm offended. I was just worried about Vnee.

Adamantine Earth Fiend Ijido looked this way. It seems he wants to become friends…

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tl: the above is a line from DQ when a monster wants to join the party

Chapter 14 – Puzzle Hell

I wasn't employed in my old world so I can only guess, but I wonder if the enquiry divisions of call centres were battlefields of neverending calls.

"No, the correct answer for that question is left!"

"Like I fucken know! How bout you think for yourself a little!"

"AHH!? Why did you go left! Eh? I told you to go left, you say? …Well, there are times like that too."

"Tsk, aight, aight. I'll have a look so wait a bit!"

While giving a side glance at Sophia and Anbaal who were being bombarded by questions, I sipped my tea.

"You two sure are busy, aren't you."

"──This is your fault, isn't itt!?"

"──Ain't this your faultt!?"

They got angry.

The floor that the mixed party was currently tackling was the floor that Leonora struggled with as well; the 11th floor Quiz Floor. It's a simple floor where you're given 10 questions with 3 choices each, and the answers give you the right path to take, but if you make even a single mistake you'll be sent back to the beginning. Because of that, you need to get all 10 questions right.
Ever since they broke into the 11th floors, they've been asking Sophia and Anbaal questions without end, and their angry yells have been flying about the room.
But well, it's not like I don't understand. After all, the Hero side had

completely left out anybody who specialised in knowledge, and was a line-up filled with battle specialists. As for the Demon King faction, Renarve was a combat type, and you could say that Vikuto was the only one who was really good at thinking problems. I'm not quite sure about Ojisama, but at the very least, he didn't seem to be doing too well with the quizzes.
This party is overwhelmingly lacking in brain power.

"Has my choice to choose all battle specialists ended up in vain?"

"Those guys are basically all meatheads after all."

"My condolences."

What's more, they weren't joining their forces at all, and the Hero side and Demon King side were tackling their own quizzes. So the discord between them really is huge, huh.
However, perhaps because their gods gave them strict orders to cooperate, they did seem to at least try and head in the same direction. There was a tacit agreement that when one side solved a question, the other side would follow them, and they progressed this way while competing against each other as well.

『Fumu, the answer to this question is this way, I believe.』

『Tsk, like we'll lose!』

『Wai-, Lionel-san!? That way is wrong isn'- …AHH!?』

『…Starting from the beginning again, huh?』

『Bastards, one of you restrain that fool!』

『Uh, umm… Sorry.』

Oh? They look like they're getting along unexpectedly well.

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Compared to the Quiz Floor where they got the wrong answer again and again and were sent back to the end each time, with the Moving Floor, as long as you could see the place from above it was a lot easier, so with the advice of the Light God and the Dark God, they progressed without too much difficulty.

…Right, they progressed without too much difficulty. *They.*
Behind the scenes of the smoothly progressing mixed party was the tear-inducing efforts of Sophia and Anbaal.

“R, R, D, D, U, D, R, D, U.”

“D, L, L, D, U, R, D, D, U.”

“D, R, D, D, U, L, D, R, U.”

“R, U, D, D, R, U, R, R, D.”

“D, L, L, R, U, D, D, L, L.”

“R, R, R, R, U, D, R, R, D… So the bottommost one is the exit, huh.”

“Yes. With this, the entire room has been mapped.”

Sophia and Anbaal – drawing a rough sketch of the dungeon’s large room, and mapping the room’s arrows one by one. With the map they drew in the middle, the two of them glared at it from either side, and began wracking their brains.

“So ya get on here, and it sends ya right, then down… No good, just goes right back.”

“In that case, if you start from here… So this one was a failure as well.”

“Seriously such a bother. Cantcha just jump over it?”

“If they could do so, then they would have done so long ago.”

While following along the arrows on their map, Sophia and Anbaal were discussing the right path, but they weren't making much progress.

"Damn, that looks tough. Want some tea?"

"——Like I said, isn't this your faultt!? And yes please."

"——Like I said, ain't this your faultt!? Thanks, gimme some."

Seeing the two angry gods ask for tea anyway, I made them some. Since they were tackling a problem that was using their brains, I decided that sugar was important at times like these, so I gave them a little more than usual. But well, it's a question to begin with whether or not divines even need sugar.

"Here."

"Thank you very much."

"Ahh."

They each gave their reply as I passed them their cups, and then they turned back to the maps before taking a sip.

"————GEHO-!?"

"————BUHA-!?"

In the next instant, they spat out the tea in their mouths. Gross.

"S-, So damn sweet…!?"

"You, just how much sugar did you place in our tea!?"

"A lot."

I used about half of the sugar jar for their two cups.

“More importantly, is your map okay?”

“Eh? AAAHH!? The map that we spent so long to make…”

“Tsk, hurry up and wipe it dry!”

Sophia and Anbaal frantically wiped the map that was wet with the tea from their mouths, but the arrows were blurred, and it didn’t seem usable any more.

“Uuu, will we need to draw it all again?”

“Sif I’m gunna… Oi, this is half your fault, so help us out.”

“…Can’t be helped.”

I was wondering why on earth I needed to give advice on how to conquer the dungeon I made myself, but this time really was partially my fault, so I decided to help with just the map drawing.

“Or rather, if you just gave us the damn answer, we wouldn’t even need to do this.”

“No way. I don’t remember it.

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On the floor where you needed to get on a mine cart to reach the door, or the floor where you needed to turn the right switches to open the door, thanks to the Light God and Dark God’s efforts in drawing out diagrams, the mixed party was able to advance smoothly. But on the other hand, when it came to puzzles that you couldn’t solve even if you looked at them, as you’d expect, the two gods were greatly troubled.
The 19th floor was exactly of that sort; there were two containers, and you needed to fill the water in them evenly.

Of the two containers that were 10 units of water each, one was filled to the brim while the other was completely empty. Here, you needed to use the 3

unit bucket and the 7 unit bucket, and even out the two containers to 5 units each. If you hit a switch, it would return the water to its original levels, so you could repeat it as much as you wanted.

“Um, is this fine?”

“It’s fine.”

I asked Tena to prepare two sets of containers just the right size. The actual size of the containers were different to the ones on the 19th floor, but because they were scaled properly, they were plenty for solving the puzzle. Across the monitor, the Heroes and demons were wrestling the same problem, and made mistakes when drawing water to move them and stuff. I left the four containers in front of Sophia and Anbaal, and had Tena fill one with water.

“Why must we do something like…”

“Don’t say it. It’s damn depressing.”

Apparently having already noticed that it was the type of puzzle they were bad at, Sophia and Anbaal’s expressions were grave. However, the two of them who had begun tackling the puzzle, sighing all the while, immediately noticed something wrong and made a puzzled expression.

“This scent is…”

“Wai-, oi! Ain’t this alcohol.”

Right; Tena had filled the containers with not water, but alcohol. Noticing the smell, Sophia and Anbaal began to become oddly restless.
This world was the same in that alcohol had an inseparable relationship with religions, and wine was offered at mass. I’ve never drunk any before so I don’t know, but apparently it was common knowledge that divines liked alcohol.
That’s why I thought to test it out, but I saw that the two were obviously distracted by it and couldn’t concentrate on solving the puzzle.

Seeing them, I realised that it would be a long battle, so I decided to have a break.

“Tena, could I trouble you with some more tea?”

“Yes, understood.”

It wasn’t like I couldn’t steep the tea myself, but the tea she made was better tasting, so I asked her for more. Before long, I sipped the cup that she passed to me, and let out a long sigh.

“Um, Anri-sama? Why are you cooperating with the two of them? It would be better for them not to capture the dungeon, wouldn’t it?”

Perhaps so that the other two couldn’t hear, Tena asked me in a small voice. Certainly, just considering the match, there wasn’t any reason for me to help the two of them and the mixed party; rather, you could say it would be better for me to obstruct them. I disturbed their concentration with the alcohol, but it was just a slight prank that you couldn’t really call obstructing them.
Either way, I felt that it was just a matter of time before they solved the problem anyway, but the biggest reason was that I was thinking about the future.

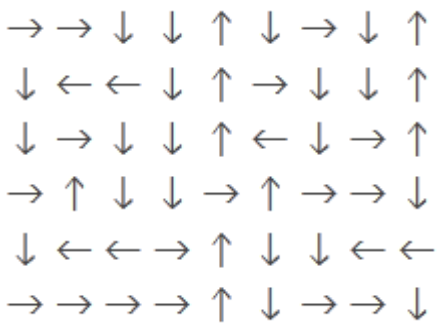
“It’s because having my relationship with them deepen is completely linked to our future.”

I succeeded in gaining a one year grace period, but you could also say that I *only* gained a year.
We concentrated our efforts on rushing to build the shops around the temple, and this country was continuing to rapidly develop. But no matter how positive we were being about it, we hadn’t reached what you would call a country. At best we had finally evolved from a village to a town. It was probable that even a year from now, we wouldn’t reach the level of a country.
In that case, if we messed things up, there was even the risk that the moment the one year was up, we would fall into the dilemma of being invaded by the other countries. In order to avoid that, there was the need to

deepen our ties with the other countries to the extent that they wouldn't invade, but the best way to do that was to have Sophia and Anbaal as the mediators.
I did already ask them to do so, but the closer our relationship began, the lower the chance of a foreign invasion. Because of that, I wanted to become as close as possible.
"Well, that's not the only thing though."

However, even if there wasn't that plan, it was true that just talking to them was quite fun. In my old world, I was an only child, so if I had an older brother or sister, would it be something like this? Or so I ended up imagining.

Would it be easier to see as arrows?
You enter from the top and leave from the bottom.
There were a number of rooms like this, all connected.



By the way, since anybody could figure it out just by trying the top arrows one by one, please don't bother with it, and since I am not really taking answers for the water container question either, please kindly refrain from writing the answers in the syosetu impressions tab.

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tl: they actually said 'right, left, up' etc. and not 'R, L, U' but it looks a lot neater in kanji, whereas in English is would just be a diarrhoea of letters, so I used single letters instead.

Chapter 15 – Armour of the Evil God

Observing the dungeon capture was basically an everyday routine to me now, but the people joining me always changed. I basically watched every single day, but the most frequent observers after me were Sophia and Anbaal, and then Leonora, Lili and Tena.
Today there just happened to be more people than usual, and almost everyone was gathered and sitting on chairs in my office while watching the screen.
Lili was sitting on Sophia's lap, while Leonora was waiting on Anbaal next to him just like last time. And Tena was standing behind me… or so I'd like to say, but unfortunately she had something else to attend to, and wasn't here.
How strange. Even though this is supposed to be a Home Game, it feels like I'm the Away Team.

"So Esteemed Father and the others have made it to the 20th floor today, huh.

"Took damn long, huh…"

"Yes, honestly…"

Perhaps feeling cornered by the last few days of puzzle solving, Sophia and Anbaal looked a little worn out. Well, members of the Divine Race shouldn't be tired from just that much, so it was probably my imagination.

"Good work."

"…Phew."

"…Hahh."

Hm? I was sure they were going to say "I don't want to hear that from you!" or a reaction like that, but the two just gave deep sighs and didn't react any

further.
It seems that they were a lot more dejected than expected.

“So Anri, there is a boss on the 20th floor as well, is there not?”

“Of course.”

“If I remember right, wasn’t it a living armour or somethin’?”

“Mn, that’s right.”

“Compared to the 10th floor boss, sounds a lot more ordinary, don’t it?”

“Really?”

Was it ordinary? Whenever I look at it, I really can’t feel that way.

By the way, although they’re called ‘Living Armour’, there are actually two main types.
There are the living armour animated by a remaining grudge that are closer to undead, and then the living armours that are animated by magic that are closer to golems. Also, they’re titled ‘living’ but neither are actually living organisms.
The one stationed as the 20th floor boss was the latter; a Living Armour similar to a golem.

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The mixed party vigilantly stepped into the boss room when the door automatically closed behind them. Orlaine was preoccupied with the shut door for a moment, but quickly turned her focus to what was in front of her.

『That’s…』

『The owner of this room, I suppose.』

In the middle of the empty room a few dozen metres in front of them stood something with eye-catching presence. Sitting with one knee raised, it was a huge set of jet black armour with a height of five metres.

“Oi, wait a moment. How the heck is that a Living Armour.”

“Mn?”

Watching the boss in the middle of the screen, Anbaal questioned me with a spasming mouth.

“No, I mean, yeah, I don’t wanna admit it but it’s a Living Armour, but no matter how you look at it that ain’t normal, right?”

“It has not retained its original form, but that is orichalcum isn’t it.”

“Not just that. She freaking hardened the thing to hell with divine protection.”

The two of them were mostly correct. The 20th floor boss was an orichalcum-type Living Armour that I gave my divine protection to. Anbaal said “freaking hardened the thing to hell” but all I did was give it divine protection the way I usually do, so I didn’t do anything special.
When I summoned it, it was a set of white armour a little bigger than the size of a human, but because of the divine protection it turned black and more than doubled in size. On top of that it was an orichalcum type to begin with so it already had high strength and magic resistance, but these rose as well.

The result was the 20th floor boss──Armour of the Evil God: **Anri**l Armour. As they approached it, the Anril Armour stood up, and raised its sword and shield. Although the movements were smooth, they were somewhat mechanical. Now that its entire figure was clear after standing up, the mixed party became even more vigilant. Although it wasn’t as strong as the Black Dragon, even so it was plenty big enough to be called gigantic. And being gigantic meant that it made for an even bigger threat.

『Brace yourselves, Renarve, Vikuto. With some bad luck, it may even be above the dragon from before.』

『Yessir. I understand.』

『I see. This may become quite a tricky one.』

The Demon King side were the first to ready themselves for combat. At Ojisama's warnings, Renarve and Vikuto both kept an eye on the Anril Armour's movements, whilst taking up combat positions so that they could deal with whatever happened.

『Let's go Lionel, Orlaine! I'll leave the support to you guys.』

『Gotcha.』

『Understood. Please leave it to us.』

The Hero side took their formations as well, with weapons at the ready. Seeing their weapons, I suddenly had a question, and turned to Sophia.

"Speaking of which, what are the Holy Sword and Holy Spear made of?"

"They are also made from orichalcum. They have my divine protection as well, but it mainly focuses on the protection of their users, and does not increase their power very much."

"The sword that the current Demon King's using is the same. But well, I wasn't really thinking about their safety or whatever, so I focused it on power though."

It's kind of turned into an 'Orichalcum and Divine Protection Fair'.
They're all the same in that they're orichalcum with divine protection, but since the focus of the blessing was different, that will probably become important. The divine protection on the Anril Armour was focused on defence so from what I've heard, it'll probably be hard for the Heroes to do any damage with the weapons they're holding. The key to this match will be

Ojisama's Demonic Sword, due to the offensive divine protection on it. Renarve and Vikuto's attacks probably won't even damage it.

『Kuh-! So hard!』

『Unfortunately, it appears that it would be best that we focus on supporting Your Majesty.』

Renarve had aimed for the opening created when the Anril Armour blocked Vikuto's ice arrows, but he grimaced at the feedback from the impact, and immediately withdrew to avoid the counterattack.
After attacking just once they noticed that their attacks had no effect, so the two Heavenly Kings immediately switched to harassment and support.

『Hah!』

With the support of the two, Ojisama began to attack. The strike succeeded in wounding the Anril Armour, but despite the fact that Ojisama's attack was enough to force back the Black Dragon, the Anril Armour simply stood on the spot and countered with a swing of its greatsword.

『Kuh-!?』

Promptly taking the blow with his Demon Sword, Ojisama was sent flying through the air, and twisting his body, he landed.

『Are you all right, Your Majesty!?』

『I am fine. More importantly, what a troublesome opponent. Unlike the dragon, it is not a living being, and does not falter in the face of attacks.』

『It doesn't seem that the Hero side are managing to do much damage either.』

At a loss as to how to continue, the Demon King side exchanged their opinions while they continued to distract it.
On the other hand, just as Vikuto said, the Hero side weren't making any progress either.

『So hard! This is even more troublesome than the dragon!』

『Even my Holy Spear can only make scratches like that!?』

『It vexes me to say this, but my Holy Bow doesn't seem like it will damage it.』

Orlain's Holy Bow itself was orichalcum, but was not something you used to directly attack, and made use of mana to attack with light arrows. No matter how even the bow might have been in material, it was something that used magic attacks, so it wouldn't make much impact on the Anril Armour.
Arc's Holy Sword and Lionel's Holy Spear were doing damage at least, but they were by no mean large wounds.

『Vikuto, do you have no plans?』

『Let's see… From what I can see, the enemy seems to react automatically to our attacks. The proof is in the fact that it reacts to every attack from Renarve and I without fail, even though we do no damage. I believe that our best option may be in having the two of us distract it, while Your Majesty attacks through the openings in its counterattacks.』

『I see. Then we shall go with that.』

『Understood.』

After promptly deciding on their strategy, the Demon King side ran into action.
Vikuto shot an ice arrow towards the Anril Armour's head, and it raised the shield in its left hand to block. Aiming for the opening below the shield, Renarve immediately ran by its feet and slashed. Of course, the slash did no damage at all in the face of the Anril Armour's defensive power. But the Anril Armour reacted to the attack, and countered by swinging a sword down at Renarve.

『OOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHH!!』

Aiming for that large opening, Ojisama jumped in as Renarve retreated with wind magic, and he swung his Demonic Sword with all his might. The attack struck against the Anril Armour's torso, and succeeded in causing the biggest wound yet.

『Fumu, it seems like this will work.』

Perhaps realising that it would be dangerously to aim for another attack against the Anril Armour that didn't hesitate from taking damage, Ojisama decided on hit-and-run tactics and temporarily retreated.
In the end, the Anril Armour only reacted mechanically, so as long as you attacked, it would continue to earnestly respond to you. Because of that, just by repeating the tactic from earlier, Ojisama was able to stack up damage.
Although they weren't coordinating, the Heroes' attacks served as perfect distractions as well, and the number of wounds on the jet black armour continued to increase.

imouto
"At first I wondered how things might progress, but the situation appears favourable, doesn't it."

"Yeah. As long as they keep repeating this, they'll probably win."

"Well, as expected of Esteemed Father and the rest, perhaps I should say."

"…?"

Sophia and Anbaal were watching the mixed party's valiant struggle as though they had already won, and Leonora agreed while looking my way in worry. Lili didn't seem to know what was going on, and tilted her head in wonder.

So naïve.
I had used a revelation, and gave orders to a certain person.

imouto
『Mu?』

The first to notice was Renarve. Next, both Vikuto and Orlaine noticed as they were watching from afar, and then finally Ojisama, Arc and Lionel.

『The movements… have changed?』

Up until now, the Anril Armour had reacted even to ineffective attacks like Renarve, Vikuto and Orlaine's, but now it had begun ignoring them and instead changed its target to the damaging Ojisama, Arc and Lionel.

That wasn't the only change. With sword still in hand, the Anril Armour raised its arm, and from it a number of shadow bullets assaulted the party.

『Kyah!?』

『Whoa! So close!』

『Impossible! An armour with no will using magic!?』

『Impossible! …That armour?』

The mixed party was shocked that the Anril Armour fired darkness magic. Using the openings from their frozen surprise, the Anril Armour swept its greatsword towards Arc and Lionel.

『Gugu… Uwah!?』

『Fuck! …Gahu-!?』

The Holy Sword and Spear managed to stop it for just an instant, but the large difference in power and size sent them flying a few metres away. Lionel was unfortunately sent flying towards a wall, so he ended up crashing into it.

imouto
"Oi, the fuck you do?"

"There is somebody inside that armour, isn't there."

With the change in the Anril Armour's behaviour, Anbaal and Sophia sent questions my way.

Sophia's guess was right. The Anril Armour is an armour set that's animated by magic, but there are two ways it can do so. Up until now it had been on autopilot mode, and was following a set pattern. Because of that, its behaviour was mechanical. In contrast, right now it was using manual mode and was being directly piloted. Because of that, it was able to adapt its behaviour to the situation, and it was able to use magic too.
However, the people able to pilot it were limited, and unless they were my kin, it was impossible to move it.

"Speaking of which, I've been wondering why I haven't seen Tena around but… it can't be…"

"Tena-oneechan?"

Right. The reason Tena wasn't participating in our peeping party was because of *that*. As a member of my kin who could use darkness magic as well, Tena easily met the requirements needed to pilot the Armour of the Evil God: Anril Armour. She's gentle and not really suited for combat, but to begin with we weren't killing in this battle, so in that regards, I could rest easy with her as the pilot.
The only problem was that she didn't have much combat experience, but unlike a direct battle with her body, this time she was piloting the armour, so you could even say it was better than she didn't have any battle experience. A skilled warrior might have been bewildered by the huge difference in feeling, but there was no need to worry about that with Tena.
『This does not bode well. The movements are completely different from a while ago.』

『Yes. Using the same tactics will not work. It ignores Vikuto and I.』

『So we can't distract it any more, huh. Unless we do even a little damage, it will probably not work…』

Saying that, Vikuto glanced in Arc and Lionel's direction.
Since Renarve and Vikuto couldn't damage it enough to distract it, they

needed somebody who could damage it enough to allow Ojisama to get a real hit in. And the only ones there who could do something like that were the Heroes.

『Your Majesty…』

『Nu… I suppose it cannot be helped.』

With Vikuto's silent suggestion, Ojisama nodded with a reluctant expression, and approached Arc and Lionel without failing to watch out for the Anril Armour.

『Oi.』

『Demon King?』

Noticing that the Ojisama had approached and called out to him, Arc replied in wonder.

『I shall only say this once. We need your power to defeat him and advance. …Lend us a hand.』

『Don't fuck with us, who the hell is going to… Arc?』

Lionel had reflexively refused, but before he could finish, Arc held up a hand to stop him.

『What do we need to do?』

『Oi, Arc!?』

『You already get it too, don't you, Lionel? We can't beat that thing alone.』

『That's…』

Unable to react to Arc's persuasion, Lionel fell silent. It was truth that although the Anril Armour wasn't impervious to their attacks, they could

only leave scratches at best. No matter how many times they attacked by themselves, it was impossible to defeat the Anril Armour.

『Aah, damnit! I got it. I'll help out too!』

『Hmph.』

In the end, Lionel folded, and they faced the Anril Armour again, Arc and Lionel at the front, and Ojisama at the back.

『Leave the offence to me. You lot bring out an opening with his attacks!』

『I don't have a damn choice, so I'll do it, but just this once, got it!』

『Let's go!』

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Huh? They suddenly started getting along…?
While I was watching the drama unfolding onscreen with a faraway look, Sophia began letting out a a voice of admiration from behind me.

"I had no idea Anri. You gave them a trial in order to reconcile them?"

"Oh? So ya *do* have a good idea from time to time."
"You sure thought it through, Anri."

"Anri-sama, you're amazing."

Eh? Nono, what kind of merit would that hold for *me?* Or so I wanted to say, but seeing Lili's pure eyes of admiration, it became really hard to.
Without thinking a thing, I just continued to stare at the screen. While I was doing so, a frantic and cornered voice arrived at my ears.
『Anri-sama, I can't anymore! I can't hold on any longer!』

The owner of the voice was Tena, who was currently being exposed to fierce attacks from the Heroes and Demon King. Of course, the one taking

the attacks was the armour outside so Tena herself wasn't injured, but once the Anril Armour broke, she'd be in danger as well.

『Well done. You can come back now.』

Either way, it didn't seem like she would be able to stop them anyway. After judging so, I teleported Tena from inside the Anril Armour to the office we were in.

"I-, I thought I was going to die…"

Stroking the slightly teary-eyed Tena on the head, I turned to look at the screen and found that the Anril Armour was quickly being wounded now that it had returned to autopilot mode. It was only a matter of time before it broke.

The middle floors were broken through as well. I finally had my back to the wall.
The only ones left were the lower floors, so I was a little anxious now.

TL: I think you've already guessed, but the name of the Living Armour is basically a stupid pun on "unreal", and perhaps a stupid pun on "mithril". Also, generally if the stuff at the top and bottom of page is in italics, it's me, Estelion.

Chapter 16 – Boss Rush

The top floors of the “Holy Land of the Evil God” were built as an orthodox dungeon.
The monsters and traps were normal, and more annoying than the dungeon itself was the miasma, but it wasn’t as though there were fatal traps, and as long as they were properly prepared, it wouldn’t be impossible for a high level adventurer party to conquer them.

Following that, the middle floors were completely different and were floors that focused on solving puzzles. In exchange for a huge decrease in monsters and traps, various puzzles lay in wait. Unlike the top floors, it was impossible to break through with simple battle power.
A dungeon like this was the only one in this world, and the lack of know-how on how to conquer it was one of the reasons for the heightened difficulty.

Then what about the lower floors that awaited beneath it?
It didn’t have ferocious traps; on the contrary, there wasn’t a single one. It didn’t have complicated puzzles either. The miasma was something that became stronger the deeper you went, but that was it.
However, even compared to the upper floors and middle floors, the difficult of the lower floors were far higher/.

The reason was extremely simple——the monsters were strong.

The monsters that appeared in the top and middle floors were stronger than those in other dungeons, but they were a miscellaneous lot that would respawn infinitely, so no matter how strong they might have been, there was a limit.
But on the other hand, the monsters that appeared on the lower floors were…

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“What is the meaning of this, Anri!?”

“This ain’t what we agreed on, yanno!”

Seeing the lower floors on-screen, Sophia and Anbaal came screaming at me.

“What are you talking about?”

“Are you intending to play the fool? I was speaking of those monsters… Aren’t they unique monsters! According to the rules, you were only allowed to summon a single dragon.”

“Boldly breakin’ the rules like this. You sure got guts, huh.”

The reason they were angry was because they saw the strength of the monsters on the lower floors.
Vampire Lord, Dragon Zombie, High Spectre, Ogre Zombie… The screen depicted an abnormal scene where high level undead that might normally be bosses in other dungeons were appearing as regular monsters.
Of course, they were miscellaneous monsters that spawned endlessly, and it goes without saying each of them was a unique monster without exception.

“『During the duration of the match, Evil God Anri will not summon additional monsters. However, a single dragon is permitted.』”

“AAHN?”

“That’s right. Did we not clearly decide on the rules already!”

Right; the rules meant that I wasn’t able to summon unique monsters. With Vnee as an exception though.
But if you were asking if I broke the rules, then that wasn’t the case either.

“I’m not breaking the rules.”

“Eh?”

“Watcha mean?”

“I’m not breaking the rules, because the one who summoned those 『wasn’t me』.”

Right. In the end, the rules only stated that it was against the rules for “me to” summon. It stated “Evil God Anri” in the writing. The rules didn’t forbid somebody “other than me” to summon unique monsters. Because of that, somebody other than me summoning unique monsters was still consistent with the rules.

“Wha-? Are you saying that there is somebody other than you who can summon that many monsters?”

“The 30th floor boss, my other kin.”

“Your other kin, you say?”

Right, it was the former 10th floor boss No Life King after I gave him my divine protection and made him my kin.
To begin with, as the king of all undead, he had the ability to summon lower class undead, but even after he evolved into something else due to my blessing, that ability was in good health. Rather, you could say that it was strengthened.
He could even summon a Vampire Lord who should have been the same tier as him back when he was still the No Life King, and he had these undead stationed between the 21st and 29th floors.

“It *is* true that it wouldn’t be strange for a divine’s kin to be capable of such a thing, but… don’t you feel that you are being a little sly?”
“I’m not breaking the rules.”

“Well yeah, ya aren’t, but…”

Sophia and Anbaal still looked a little dissatisfied, but they reluctantly accepted it since it wasn’t breaking the rules.

imouto

“But still, that is quite the gathering of fairly high-class undead, isn’t it.”

“The 30th floor boss is an undead, so that’s natural.”

“No matter how our match goes, it’s basically settled that your patroned race is gunna be all the undead, ey?”

By patroned races, Sophia’s is 『the Human Race』, Anbaal’s is 『the Demon Race』, and mine is 『Undead』 huh? I don’t particularly like undead or anything, and zombies and rotting ones like that are actually something I’m bad with, but since it fits the image of an Evil God, I can’t find any words to reply with.

“…I’ll think about it.”

“Yeah, do so.”

“But Anbaal. As long as the undead are not high-class, almost all of them lack a will. Will the faith she gathers from them not be quite trivial?”

“Well yeah, but it ain’t a big deal. Once she combines it with 『Fear』, it ain’t bad, right? Undead themselves are pretty feared, after all.”

“I see. That is certainly true.”

Personally, I would prefer not to be more feared than I already am but… being feared gets me more faith, so my feelings are a little complex. Having thought that far, I remembered a question about faith that I had been wanting to ask Sophia for a while now.

“I remembered it since you mentioned faith, but are you okay with the humans that turned into my followers?”

She’s in charge of the Human Race and they’re the basis for her faith, but the Pope and the humans of this country worship me instead. Wouldn’t she look unkindly upon it? Or so I’ve been wondering.

“It would trouble me if they increase too much, but just a portion of them is fine. Moreover, rather than being faithful towards you, they were closer to rejecting faith towards myself, so the responsibility lies with me.”

“I see. Then that’s great.”

It’s true that they weren’t originally faithful towards me, but rather that they were rebelling against the Church of Sacred Light, and I just sort of hijacked it. As the darkness that’s naturally born from light, although their beliefs were in the form of rejection, you could say that they did believe in Sophia in a way.

“Guess since ya had the right attributes as a divine, it worked out. Tough stuff. Well, I did have some problems when you first popped into this world though.”

“……Eh?”

Hearing this for the first time, I accidentally let my voice leak out. They noticed me from that long ago?

“You knew about me?”

“Well of course we did. From a long time ago, visitors from another world have not been particularly rare, but even amongst them, you were by far the most different, after all. Most of them had the light attribute, but you…”

“And it wasn’t even a simple darkness attribute, yanno? To begin with, even though basically all the visitors have appeared on a magic circle on our end, you completely ignored that and forcefully came in here, so you stood out.”

“I was just sent in here.”

It’s not like I came here of my own will. I was just forcefully sent here by that Evil God.

“We understand that much. At the very least, when you had first arrived in our world, you did not have enough power to cross the walls of the worlds.”

“Just as we were thinking that we’d just watch ya for a bit, ya suddenly turned into a divine, so we were pretty anxious at the time, yanno?”

That wasn’t my intention either. It was all things that couldn’t be helped.

“After that I was on guard more, but all ya did was gather followers, or create a country, or spread a scripture, and nothing particularly suspicious.”

“There were some points of doubt, but it was fact that there was a new Administrator. It would not have done to ignore the issue of 『Authorities』 so we decided to come into direct contact with you.”

“You’re telling me this now because you trust me more?”

“Well, at the very least we have confirmed that you yourself have no schemes.”

“Personality sucks though.”

Quiet, Anbaal. Also I don’t want to hear that from you.

“From the way you said that, you mean that somebody other than me is scheming?”

“The intention of the one that sent you in here is unknown, after all. Did you hear anything from them?”

“…Nothing at all.”

Being asked that by Sophia, I searched my memories, but couldn’t remember hearing anything in particular from when I was sent in here by that Evil God. He didn’t tell me what to do in this world either.

“Considering that he did not contact you before, nor after you became a divine, should we perhaps consider it as a mere whim…?”

“Well, can’t hurt to be cautious, ey?”

“Indeed.”

“Got it.”

It’s true that I don’t know anything about that Evil God. I don’t know if I’ll ever know why I was sent into this world, but I’ll bear it in mind.

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The monsters that appeared on the lower floors were all high-class undead. And the strength of each one was on par with the old No Life King. Considering that No Life King was more or less on par with Leonora, the party was facing a group of enemies that all had the strength of a Heavenly King.
If it was just one battle, then the mixed party with both the Demon King and two of the Four Heavenly Kings would probably have the advantage. But once they repeated the fighting over and over, they would eventually grow tired, and it was clear as day that the disadvantage would fall to the challengers.

…That’s what I thought.

After crossing swords with the monsters and then leaping back in retreat, Ojisama spoke to Arc.

『It seems that the weapons used by you lot would be more effective on these.』

『Arc.』

『What?』

『My name. Not ‘you lot’, but Arc.』

Ojisama looked at Arc’s expression with a dubious expression, but perhaps eventually sensing his intention, he gave a manly smile and brandished his sword.

『Hmph, very well. Then Arc, this will be the opposite of the time with the Living Armour earlier. I shall cut open a path, so you put them down.』

『Leave it to me!』

Arc and Ojisama──

『Can't be helped. I'll support ya.』

『Hmph, somebody of your calibre is going to support *me*?』
『Heh! Aren't you the one bumping into *me* by accident?!』
『I would not commit such a blunder!』

Lionel and Vikuto──

『You were, Miss Orlaine, weren't you.』

『M-, Miss!?』

『I shall take care of all the enemy attacks, so I would like to have you concentrate on attacking.』

『…Yes!』

Orlaine and Renarve──

Each of them paired up, and began attacking the enemy in combination. Certainly, making use of the Heroes' Holy Weapons against the undead was the best strategy. But who on earth could have predicted that these two groups that should have been hostile until just a few days ago could work together this well.

Seeing them get along so well was instead making me worry about the future.
They look so close that in the worst case, Ojisama might even say something like "Hmph, falling in a place like this is pathetic. Were you not going to defeat me?" and save the Heroes in a pinch.
Or maybe on their journey together they would realise the existence of the

mastermind, or some great evil, and stand together as companions to defeat it or something… Wai-, isn't that exactly this situation?

No, no, whether it's 'mastermind' or 'great evil', neither of them fit me no matter how you think about it, so it has to be different. Leaving my public image aside.
While I was thinking about such things, the mixed party pushed back against the pressure of the monsters.

Ojisama opened a path with his flames, and Arc leapt in with determination and cut at the Vampire Lord.
Weaving skilfully through the gaps created by Vikuto's ice arrows, Lionel stabbed at the Dragon Zombie.
Renarve parried the High Spectre's magic with a sword clad in wind magic, and protected by him, Orlaine hit it with light arrows.

It was a scene worthy of being sung in legends or myths.

『Alright! Found the stairs!』

『Jump in in turn! Our objective is not to defeat the monsters, but to advance ahead!』

『You guys can go right ahead, leave the rearguard up to me!』

『Renarve, Miss Orlaine, please go ahead first!』

『Understood!』

『Y-, *You're* calling me 'Miss' as well…? Geez, understood!』
This was only the 21st first floor, and with all the floors up until the 29th, the road ahead was still long. Normally, seeing them struggle so much on the first floor, you wouldn't imagine them reaching the bottom floor no matter what. But for some reason I basically expected that they would reach there.

It seems that I might finally need to prepare myself for the worst.

It’s a rule that the early game bosses appear in the end of the dungeon as normal monsters, after all.

No Life King-sama? He’s still in the middle of warming up.

Chapter 17 – Imperial Death

The large doors creaked as they opened.
With nothing to block it, the overwhelming sense of presence from inside the room increased, and the mixed party faintly trembled before the door.

『…Let us go.』

With the Demon King's voice, the party came back to their senses, and their vigilance naturally made their steps slow.
Ahead of them was a throne on a platform a step higher than the rest of the room, and upon it sat the lord of the room.
Sitting on the luxurious throne and waiting for the Heroes and demons was a skeleton clad in a jet black robe. He was much smaller than the Black Dragon and Armour of the Evil God, and could only be taken as the size of a normal human. However, the people gathered in that room withered in face of the pressure greater than any of the previous foes.

『……』

『……』

The party advanced as far as just before the throne, but he merely sat there and gazed at them with his dark, eyeless sockets, and showed no further reaction.
Because of the feeling of pressure that he released, the party found themselves unable to speak first, and waited wordlessly.
In that tense silence that discouraged even clearing their throat, when the party was about to reach their mental limits, the skeleton spoke first.
In a voice that may well have invited death upon anybody with a weak mind, a low voice that seemed to shake the soul, he welcomed them.

『Welcome, my guests. You are the first to have reached here.』

That line was similar to his previous one, but the only one who knew that was Leonora and myself.

『You… “What” are you?』

『Fumu. In the past I may have answered “a King”, but at present I am nothing more than a single servant of my God──Anri-sama.』

『Anri… Evil God Anri?』

The skeleton had quietly replied to the Demon King’s question. Hearing my name, the expressions of the Heroes turned grave.

『So we can take it to mean that you’re the boss here, right?』

『Indeed. I have been appointed by my God as the guardian of this room. Therefore, I cannot allow you to proceed beyond here.』

Hearing the skeleton’s words, their vigilance heightened, and they prepared their weapons.

『Hu-』

『!? What’s so funny!?』

The skeleton laughed at them, and Orlaine gave an exaggerated reaction. It told of her nervousness.

『Not funny, but joyous, …Young Miss.』

『Young-…!? T-, Then joyous about what?』

『As I stated earlier, you are the first ones to have reached this floor. Although it was an honour to be appointed as guardian of this place and I had not an iota of dissatisfaction, it is also the truth that I found it vexing to have no opportunity to display my loyalty to my God. And in this moment, that opportunity has finally arrived; what could this be but joyous?』

Having said that, the skeleton stood up, flicked back his jet back robe, before spreading his arms wide.

『Let us exchange our names; I am Imperial Death. A retainer and kin of my exalted God──Anri-sama, as well as the one appointed as guardian of this room.』

The skeleton──Imperial Death, gave his name, and in response the Heroes held out the weapons that could be called their symbols, and the party members named themselves one by one.

『Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc.』

『Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel.』

『Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine.』

『Demon King, Eligor Romariel.』

『One of the Four Heavenly Kings, Fierce Gale Knight Renarve.』

『Likewise, Bloodfrost General Vikuto.』

Imperial Death gave a satisfied nod in response, and displayed his intent to fight.

『Now then. Come. To demonstrate my loyalty, I shall be your opponent with all my power.』

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『I'm going to attack!』

『Please leave the support to me!』

The first move was taken by Orlain and Vikuto, who had begun to attack from afar. They released as many arrows as they could at once, and they

rained down towards Imperial Death. However, he raised his right hand, and a round barrier appeared, easily blocking the rain of arrows.

『An opening!』

Seeing Imperial Death defend against the arrows, Lionel rushed up and aimed for the torso with his Holy Spear. No matter how overwhelming he might have been, Imperial Death was still an undead. In that case, the Holy Weapon that was effective against undead should have dealt him huge damage. Lionel had attacked with that belief, but the strike was all too easily stopped.

『I-, Impossible…』

With his right hand still maintaining the barrier, Imperial Death blocked the incoming Holy Spear with just his left hand. No, more accurately, he stopped it with just the index finger of his left hand. The brittle-looking finger bone blocked a strike from one of the strongest weapons in the world; seeing that seemingly impossible scene, not only Lionel, but everyone in the room froze. Did this mean that Imperial Death himself boasted greater defence than the Armour of the Evil God?

『If you wish to aim for an opening, then you ought not shout your intentions to do so.』

Saying so, Imperial Death reached out and grabbed the Holy Spear, before casually waving his hand. His strength was impossible to imagine from a mere skeleton the size of a human, and together with his Holy Spear, Lionel was sent flying parallel the ground.

『UOOHHHHHHHH!?』

『Kuh-, make it in time!』

Renarve immediately reacted and ran towards the flying Lionel, before catching him. Had Renarve not been there, Lionel would have hit the wall dozens of metres away, and become unable to fight in that instant.

『Guh-, sorry!』

『It is no big deal.』

Lionel thanked Renarve for saving him, and Renarve shook his head with a smile.

『Watch out!』

『Would I let you!』

While Lionel and Renarve exchanged their short lines, they heard a voice from somewhere else.
Wondering what had happened and turning around, Renarve and Lionel found that right next to them, something black was flying their way at incredible speed. The other voice had come from the direction of the Demon King and Arc, who were attacking Imperial Death with their swords.
Realising that they were saved by a hair's breath because Imperial Death had been attacked when he was about to fire, Lionel and Renarve got up and ran to join the two engaged with Imperial Death.

『Sorry, you saved me!』

『My apologies, Your Majesty.』

Because Arc and the others were fighting at close range, Orlaine and Vikuto had stopped their attacks and watched for an opening. Because of that, Imperial Death's free right hand turned to the two he had been fighting with. However, with Renarve and Lionel joining the frame, the situation began to change.
Perhaps because he really could not handle a four-on-one close combat battle, Imperial Death released mana from his whole body, and blew the four away to gain some distance.

『Speaking of which…』

『?』

Just as Arc and the others were about to close the distance to attack again, Imperial Death spoke before they could. Having lost the timing to attack, they could now do nothing but lend him an ear.

『Although I said that I would be your opponent with all my power, if I remain barehanded it would hardly be truth, would it.』

『What-!?』

In front of the surprised party, Imperial Death held his right hand out. The party watched with bated breath. Under his hand, a black pole of some sort came out from his shadows. Grasping it in his right hand and swiftly pulling it out of the shadows, Imperial Death held the weapon with both hands.

It was a single-edged scythe, that was about as long as he was tall. A skeleton clad in jet black robes, holding a scythe… It was the very image of the grim reaper from the legends. It might have seemed ironic that the undead emperor who rejected death was taking the form of the reaper that invited it, but it was probably partially because of the image I had when I gave him the divine protection.

『I have kept you waiting. Shall we continue?』

Hearing this, the party couldn't make any careless moves. The overwhelmingly powerful barehanded enemy was now holding a weapon. Nobody in the room was foolish enough to not be vigilant about that.

『Whatever is the matter? Will you not come? Then I shall move instead.』

With those words, Imperial Death suddenly disappeared.

『Wha-!? Where did he go?』

They frantically searched for him, but couldn't find him anywhere. Then in the next moment, in front of the backline support Orlaine and Vikuto, Imperial Death suddenly made his appearance.

『Impossible!』

『It can't be!?』

Cutting through Vikuto's promptly made water barrier as though it was paper, and smacking away like a twig the Holy Bow that Orlaine tried to shield herself with, Imperial Death's swinging scythe cut deeply into the Orlain's shoulder and Vikuto's abdomen.

『KYAAH!?』

『Guh- …!!』

『Orlaine!』

『Vikuto!』

The other tried to run up to the two who had collapsed with a cry, but before they could, Imperial Death disappeared once again.

『Kuh-, he disappeared again.』

『Incredible speed… is not, what he's using. Short distance teleportation?』

『Yes, although this ability is limited to use in the dungeon.』

Hearing the words from behind himself, the Demon King immediately cut backwards without even turning his head.

『Mu-, this will not do. The one who advised against speaking when attacking an opening was I myself, wasn't it.』

Blocking the Demon King's swing with his scythe, Imperial Death laughed wryly as he disappeared.

『Kuh-, this is bad! At this rate, it'll just be one-sided attacks.』

『Take up a circular formation! We will remove our blind spots!』

Following the Demon King's instructions, Arc, Lionel and Renarve gathered together, and they stood back-to-back so that they could defend against attacks from every angle.

『Where. Where will he attack from?』

The four searched in vigilance, but Imperial Death wouldn't appear at all. Although they grew tired of waiting, they desperately tried to concentrate, when a voice called out to them.

『Remove all blind angles… huh. Not a bad idea…』

The party turned to the voice, and found that Imperial Death was seated back on his throne, with his right hand aimed towards them.

『However, just because I am holding a weapon, does not by any means suggest that I cannot use magic, you know.』

『!? Scatter!』

Faster than they could react to the Demon King's voice came a mass of darkness from Imperial Death's hand, flying towards where they were gathered.
They immediately jumped down on the spot, but Lionel who was closest to the throne was hit, unable to dodge.

『GUAHHHHHHHHH-…!?』

『Uwah!?』

『Kuh…』

『Nu…』

Lionel was hit terribly hard, and collapsed on the spot with a groan.
Although the other three avoided a direct hit, they still received damage from the aftermath.

『Kuh-, what strength!』

『He certainly is far stronger than any enemy before. Even if we continue to fight, our defeat will probably be inevitable.』

『Your Majesty, and also Arc-dono… I will try to block the next attack. Can I leave the offence to you?』

『Renarve!?』

『…Understood.』

Arc raised a shocked voice at Renarve's determined suggestion, but the Demon King agreed with a stern expression.

『Are you finished with your discussion? Well then, let us continue… No, perhaps it is about time to end it. You all fought well. I shall remember this fight for eternity.』

Muttering this quietly, Imperial Death once again disappeared.
Up until now, they had frantically searched for him when he vanished, but this time they just wordlessly concentrated, swords at the ready. Also, Renarve had closed his eyes quietly, and spread wind magic through the area.

『There!』

Renarve thrust with all his might towards the disturbance in the air flow. Although Imperial Death's skull made a shocked expression, as he had appeared right before the attack, he calmly dealt with Renarve's attack and swung his scythe.
If he had retreated then he could have avoided any large damage, but instead Renarve chose to stand there and block the scythe's attack with his body.

『What-!?』

『Guh-… Now!』

Renarve gave the signal even with his expression twisted in anguish, and Arc responded.

『AHH!』

Imperial Death tried to respond to Arc's swing of the Holy Sword, but Renarve had gripped the scythe, and unable to block with the scythe, he let go of it and stopped the Holy Sword with his arm.

『Your aim was fine, but I see you lack power… Nu?』

Imperial Death had laughed after blocking the Holy Sword, but after seeing that Arc's expression was not one of despair, he raised a quizzical voice.

『Then I shall… add to that power.』

The Demon King ran up, and smacked his Demon Sword onto the Holy Sword pressed against the skeleton arm. The impact caused the Holy Sword to push deeply into it, and snapped the arm beneath it.

『NU, OOHHHHHHH!?』

The Holy Sword with two people's strength had snapped Imperial Death's arm, and continued to swing down. The flash of the sword had failed to reach the enemy, but it cut into his robe, and black cloth danced through the air.

『Kuh-, he evaded it?』

『But it is a fact that we have pressured him. There is nothing to do but continue to attack… Mn?』

Arc and the Demon King had jumped back to observe their enemy, but seeing Imperial Death's lack of reaction, the two made puzzled expressions. Looking carefully, he was looking at the ground a small distance away from him, and paid no heed to Arc or the Demon King.
Although he was much too filled with openings, that instead begged suspicion, and the two could not attack. Wondering what was happening, he

followed Imperial Death's gaze, and found that something black was lying there.

『……r』

『What?』

Noticing Imperial Death's quiet murmur, the Demon King raised a voice of question, but Imperial Death continued to stare at the floor, completely motionless. The black thing on the ground was part of the robe that had been cut earlier.

『…Cur』

『O-, Oi?』

Hearing the deep, ominous voice that seemed to come from Hell itself, the two of them reflexively flinched.

『CURCURCURCURCUR! HOW DARE YOU! HOW DARE YOU CUT THE ROBE BESTOWED BY ANRI-SAMA!』

『————!?』

『————!?』

Imperial Death began to fly into a rage, and the two of them stiffened at his intense anger.
And then, floating into the air, Imperial Death began to release incredible pressure. But although I say pressure, it wasn't the type that seemed to put force on the surroundings, and instead the surroundings seemed to be drawn into an invisible 'something'. Continually sucking and concentrating, that 'something' started to be dense enough to see… It was miasma from all across the dungeon.
The miasma was thicker the deeper it was in the dungeon, and on the 30th floor that was close to the very bottom, the air was filled with the thickest miasma. And that miasma was now being drawn into a single undead.

Imperial Death took that concentrated miasma into himself, and his figure changed into something ever more sinister.

『Looks like we stepped on the tail of a dragon, huh.』

『So this is as far as we go…』

In front of the two exchanging their words of resignation, Imperial Death placed the concentrated miasma around his scythe, and he swung.

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(¯―¯-¯―¯)
Chudooon.
(eyes closed, facing up to the sky)
The scene was such a tragedy that I couldn't bear to look, so I closed my eyes, shielded my ears, and accompanied it with a sound effect in my mind. Wondering if I could open them yet, I had a peek, and found on-screen the tattered Arc and Ojisama lying on the floor. With the collapse of the final party members, the party was now wiped out.

Wondering why there was no reaction, I looked at the people in the room, and found that everyone had their mouths hanging open in a daze. Since it was a climax, everyone was here today, but every single one of them was dumbfounded.
Seeing this, I decided to stealthily head to the exit.

"Stop."

But my efforts were fruitless, and I had the nape of my neck violently caught by Sophia.

"What on earth is that?"

"What, you ask? It's the other kin that I told you about earlier."

When I replied as such, Sophia gave a deep sigh.

“No matter how I look at it, that is no regular kin. Isn’t he already close to reaching the realm of a divine? That has to be foul play, right!?”

“There was no rule like that.”

“No, I have to agree with her, yanno? That ain’t something a human or demon can stand up to, right?”

“But even so, I’m not breaking the rules.”

“To begin with, why does somebody who just became a divine have a kin that became something like *that*?”
“She’s got a point, yanno. Unless a kin with terribly strong faith spends a few hundred years like that, then they basically ain’t gunna turn into something like *that*, but…”
“Well I don’t know why he’s like that either.”

I thought things would turn out like this. Since he completely ignores words like prudence or restraint, I thought that Sophia and Anbaal would get mad if they found out about him so I was really depressed when I realised that the mixed party had made it this far.
But there’s no option left to me except talking back.
It’s true that it wasn’t breaking the rules, so there shouldn’t be a problem.

Side-stepping Sophia and Anbaal’s questioning, while avoiding Tena, Leonora and Lili’s stares, I silently came to that conclusion all by myself.

Mixed party was defeated!
Anri obtained Holy Sword, Holy Spear, Holy Bow, Demon Sword!

Chapter 18 – Conclusion

The mixed party achieved the record of reaching the lowest floor yet, but the last stronghold and 30th floor boss──Imperial Death, defeated them and they failed.
Also, because they were defeated within the dungeon, there was no reason to exempt them from the rule of taking their weapons and items even if they were the Heroes and Demon King, so the Holy Sword, Holy Spear, Holy Bow and Demon Sword were properly collected. Of course, the other items and gold were as well.

And that moment could be said to be the moment that it became impossible for them to conquer the dungeon.

The source of the Heroes' strength were the Holy Weapons that held Sophia's blessing, and now that they had been taken away, the Heroes lost most of their strength.
As for Ojisama, it wasn't as though he was that dependent on his weapon, but as you'd expect, there was a huge difference in fighting strength once he didn't have the Demon Sword.
With their blessed weapons gone, they had already lost the power needed to conquer the dungeon.

imouto
And like that, it spelt the end to the match.

imouto
Incidentally, since Sophia and Anbaal demanded the weapons, I was just keeping a hold of them temporarily, and it was decided that I would return them after the match.
Now that I had collected them, they were mine, so I could have ignored the two, but apparently now that the Holy Weapons had Sophia's blessings they had the function of flying back to the owner when they called for it, and there was nothing more dangerous than weapons flying about the dungeon.
For now I had a hold of them, and tossed them into a room locked from the

outside, but from the sounds inside the room you could tell that they were rampaging about. The Heroes were probably continuing to call for them without giving up.
I personally want to return these troubling weapons as soon as possible. Considering the situation, I wouldn't be able to sell them after all, and I couldn't use them as dungeon drops either.
The Demon Sword didn't have that function and so it was behaving, but if I was returning the Holy Weapons, it wouldn't be fair not to return the Demon Sword. And what's more, apparently the Demon Sword was passed down each generation, and would one day be passed down to Leonora, so as a friend I felt that I ought to return it.
But well, I really don't have any obligation to give them back, so it should be fine if I demand some compensation, right?

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In only thirty minutes, it would be a whole year since the match began.
In order to check up on the 『Proof of Capture』 that I placed on the 31st floor, we all gathered there.

"The 『Proof of Capture』 is…"

"Don't tell me it's *that*?"
Seeing the 『Proof of Capture』, both Tena and Leonora's expressions cramped. Speaking of which, Sophia and Anbaal already knew, but I never told these two.
There was a round-table-shaped pedestal in the middle of the room, and on top of it was an eerie patchwork doll.
This was the 『Proof of Capture』 that I left here, and was the proxy I used when Leonora first came here; the cursed Tena doll.

Also, since I became a member of the Divine Race myself, I conquered the cursed equipment problem, but that didn't mean that the curse on the doll itself was gone. Because of that, if anyone but myself or my kin Tena touched it, the doll would be their present – curse and all. Or at least that was my plan.
It's not like I was thinking something treacherous like "Conquer my

dungeon huh? Curse you!" or anything. It was a nuisance though, so I did hope that somebody would take it away though.

"There is only a little time left, isn't there."

"Tsk."

"Hii!?"

Although it basically spelt their defeat when the Heroes and Ojisama lost their weapons, Sophia and Anbaal never declared defeat. But at this point, as you'd expect they had no choice but to give up on victory. Sophia seemed discouraged, but Anbaal was clearly in a bad mood.
Because Anbaal was being too obvious with his irritation, Lili got scared and hid behind my back.

"No invaders are ever going to reach here in time, so I suppose your match is set, huh."

"Congratulations, Anri-sama."

Hearing Leonora and Tena congratulate me, my victory finally felt real. In order to pick up the 『Proof of Capture』 as a victory trophy, I headed… or at least I tried to head towards the pedestal, but I stacked it.
Having lost my balance and begun to fall, I looked back and saw that Lili was standing on top of my dress hem. Apparently when she hid behind me in fear of Anbaal, she stood on my dress by accident. Unlike the robe that I used to wear, the dress was pretty long, and if I wasn't careful, it could get stepped on.
As though being pulled from behind, while I was falling I reflexively reached out to grab the table in front of me, and somehow managed to avoid falling right to the ground.

"Are you all right, Anri-sama!?"

"I-, I'm sorry…"

Tena hurried over to help me up. And Lili… you don't have to apologise, so please get off my dress.

"Oioi, the hell ya doin'?"

"Well, it seems that you managed to avoid falling."

Anbaal and Sophia called out to me in astonishment.

"The hem is longer than your old clothing, so if you aren't careful it'll be dangerous, you know. Also, you sent the doll flying all this way."

It happened in an instant so I didn't realise, but when I grabbed at the table earlier, apparently the cursed Tena doll had been sent flying by Leonora's feet.
Saying that, she bent over and picked up the doll.

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imouto
"……Ah."

Seeing that, Tena let out a sound. Everybody in the room heard that, and following Tena's gaze, we moved our eyes to Leonora.

"……Ah."

"……Ah."

"……Ah."

"……Ah."

Everybody let out the exact same, stupid voice.

"Eh? ……Ah."

Leonora was perplexed by everybody's gaze suddenly turning to her, but she followed our gazes to what was in her hand, and after realising what it was, she let out the same sound.

"""""""AAAHHHHHH!?"""""""""

In the midst of this room filled with cries, the teleportation magic activated, and Leonora disappeared.

imouto
imouto
Leonora, you idiot…

imouto
imouto
◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

"I can't accept this."

Moving to the round table in the office, that was the first thing I said.

"The winner is whoever has their patroned race touch the 『Proof of Capture』 first, ain't it? There ain't any basis for you to complain."

It's true that since Leonora is a demon, it's Anbaal's win based on the rules. But I can't accept an accident like that overturning the outcome of the match. To begin with, it all began when he scared Lili.

"What do you think, Sophia?"

"Let's see. It is true that it was a sloppy way to decide things, but according to the rules, I do not think we can help but acknowledge Anbaal's victory."

From her point of view, no matter whose victory it was, she would still be the loser, so I suppose it can't be helped that she wasn't interested in changing the rules.
I knew myself that my opinion was at a disadvantage. But, it was a little… no, it was *very* frustrating.

“A-, Anri… I was wrong, so can’t you forgive me already?”

“No. Continue your seiza.”

A voice called to me from the corner of the room, but I replied a little coldly. It was Leonora, and a little while ago I had her sit in seiza to reflect on her actions.
It was partially my fault as well for having the doll fall from the table, which is why I don’t intend to scold her all that harshly, but even so a large part of it was her carelessness, so I wanted her to reflect.

“Then leaving the seiza aside, could you at least take away this doll…?”

“No. Hold onto it for a while.”

On top of Leonora’s lap as she sat in seiza was the cursed Tena doll. Originally the curse of the doll made it so that once you threw it away, it would suddenly come back to you at some point, but perhaps the curse began stronger while I left it alone, because now it leveled up, and would quickly toddle back to you when you let go of it. Thanks to that, Leonora couldn’t get rid of it even if she wanted, and had been holding it the whole time.

“Well, you can settle things with her however you like. But no matter how it happened, win’s a win, yanno. Know when ta give up.”

“……Fine.”

At Anbaal’s reminder, I reluctantly accepted my defeat. It was frustrating though.

imouto
imouto
“And so, guess I better hand out the 『Authories』, ey.”

Saying that, Anbaal sat down at the round table, and a countless number of letters appeared around him. Next, the same thing happened around Sophia.

“These are the 『Sub-Authories』 we have. There ain’t anything new we oughta add to them, so we’ll just be handing over a fraction of the ones we already have to ya.”

“Specifically, what fraction will we be handing over?”

“Let’s see… How ’bout 2/5ths.”

Each of them separated 2/5ths of their 『Sub-Authorities』, and our ratio became 6:6:8, Sophia:Anbaal:myself.

“Then I’m the only one with more. Unfair.”

“As long as it is to an extent that there is no disruption to the balance, there should be no problem.”

It’s true that we had the match because they wanted a little less, so I didn’t intend to complain about the distribution being unfair.
What I was complaining about was that only *I* was getting more.
The one who won the match was Anbaal, so it should have been fine if he just increased both Sophia and mine, so I couldn’t accept that he targetted only me.
“Why is it just me?”

“You’re the newbie, so dontcha need experience. I’m giving ya work outta the goodness of my heart, so be grateful.”

I glared at him, but Anbaal ignored me with a nonchalant expression.
Or rather, that’s definitely a lie. There’s definitely no mistake that this was revenge for the hardships he had with the dungeon capture.
But it was in the rules that the winner would be deciding the ratios, so since it wasn’t large enough that it destroyed the balance, even if it was frustrating I wouldn’t change a thing even if I made a fuss.

“Well then, how ’bout we go from my Deadly Sin Types. Lessee, I’ll give ya 『Gluttony』, 『Greed』, 『Lust』 and 『Envy』.”

Hah? By Deadly Sins is that the Seven Deadly Sins? So they had the same concept in this world too?
But still, the selection he handed me sure was cruel. I'd better protest.

"I'm not that big of an eater."

"If a divine who doesn't even need food eats three meals a day, ain't that gluttonous enough?"

Being told that, I couldn't even go "Guu…" in frustration, but lately haven't you and Sophia been eating three meals too…?

"Then about 『Greed』…"

"No, no matter how ya look at it, it suits you perfectly, right?"

……Well, I *did* take an entrance fee, so I guess that can't be helped.
But the last two definitely do *not* fit me.
"『Lust』 and 『Envy』 don't match me."

"To begin with, it just helps if you have a reference, so it doesn't even really matter, yanno?"

That's way too different from what you said earlier.
Or rather, if the Deadly Sins are the same as the Seven Deadly Sins, the only ones left are 『Sloth』, 『Pride』 and 『Wrath』 …He definitely kept those because he thought they were cool, that guy.
Also, that's not following the ratio. If you say 2/5ths then don't hand me over half.

"Well then, I shall hand you some from my Virtue Types. I will give you 『Moderation』, 『Thrift』 and 『Endurance』."

Whoa, whoa, it's weird once you mix it in with the Deadly Sins. You can't have both 『Gluttony』 and 『Moderation』 after all.
Also that means she left behind 『Diligence』, 『Chastity』, 『Compassion』, 『Humility』; all the good sounding ones for herself.
While I was in blank amazement at how unreasonable it was, the letters

floating around Sophia and Anbaal flew towards me.
Do not want. Do not want, I said.

“Well then, next are the Living Being Types, huh…”

Wait, please wait. At this rate, something outrageous is going too…

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A few hours later, ignoring me as I lay burn out over the table, Sophia and Anbaal left the room with satisfied expression after completing pushing 『Authorities』 onto me.

“Um, Anri-sama… Are you all right?”

“I’m… not.”

Raising my head in bother, I looked at the words floating around me. They were completely random. Governing over such a hodgepodge of 『Authorities』, I don’t even know if I can be called the Evil God anymore.
In the end, Anbaal said “Since you made this whole bloody mess, this suits ya just fine.” and left the word 『Chaos』 in front of me, so I was completely angry.

imouto
『Gained title “Odd God”.』

imouto
I heard the 『System』’s voice for the first time in a while, but 『Odd God』? What the heck is 『Odd God』.
You’re supposed at least make it “Chaos God”, right!?

imouto
How on earth am I supposed to get rid of this irritation.

“Ummm… C-, Can I stop with the seiza soon?”

And while I was thinking that, what reached my ears was the voice of Leonora, who had been sitting in seiza for the entire time. It seems that the numbness in her legs had just about reached the limit, and just stirring a little would send incredible stimulation down her legs, so she was stuck frozen solid unable to move.
Speaking of which, the reason this happened was half her fault, wasn't it.

Finding a place to point my sword, I smiled darkly inside, before reaching my fingers out to her legs.

There are two chapters left until the main story is finished.

TL: Odd God, or 『変神』 is read as 'henjin' – it sounds exactly the same as for the word 変人 (weirdo), so it's basically the same as calling her a weirdo.

Chapter 19 – The Evil God's Temptation

When I came to, I was in a pitch dark place with not a single source of light.
Being a place that I had memory of, I checked my clothes in a fluster.
…Thank goodness, I'm still wearing them.

The sound of clapping reached my ears, and when I turned that way, there stood the person I expected.
A boy with long black hair… The Evil God that sent me into this world.

"Yo, 's been a while."

With his usual mocking smile, the Evil God spoke to me.

"What do you want?"

"So cold. Even though it's our touching reunion."

This isn't a joke. At the very least, I'm not touched in the slightest. Thinking about it, all of the hardships I went through this year were mostly because of the Evil God in front of me. Truly a god of misfortune.
Being called into this place with this kind of timing gives me nothing but a bad feeling about this.

"Well whatever. The reason I called you here today was just as my earlier applause indicated – I wanted to offer my gratitude and reward for your achievements so far."

"Gratitude and reward?"

Hearing these unexpected words, I accidentally asked him again. And what does he mean by achievements so far?

"First is my gratitude. It was terribly fun watching you do things. It was just a whim of an idea, but I'm really glad I sent you into this world."

Jerk.
I had faintly noticed it, but it seems that I really am a toy to this Evil God.

“To begin with, why did you even send me there?”

“If you’re asking why I sent a servant in, then it was to make use of the floating faith to create a kin. As for why it was you, well, you seemed like you’d be interesting.”

“In other words, the fact that I joined the Divine Race was all predetermined?”

“Nah, you’re wrong. It’s true that I made it easier for you, but even I didn’t know if you would become one or not. I was actually pretty surprised you know? To think that you’d become a divine *that*quickly. Even I didn’t expect it.”
Hearing his reply, I felt a little relieved. If all my actions so far were just dancing on the palm of his hand, honestly speaking, it would have been a major shock.

“And, what would you have done if I hadn’t become a divine?”

“Nothing really? If that time came, then I was gunna think about it then. If you became one then great, I thought, but it’s not like I absolutely needed you to become one.”

I got treated pretty casually, but I’m not particularly angry.

“Is there some merit to creating kin?”

I have Tena and Imperial Death as kin, but they’re useful because they’re my allies. To the Evil God in front of me, I may be his kin, but I don’t intend on serving him, and I don’t intend on doing anything for him either.
Just what kind of merit would there be in creating a kin like me?

“The number of your kin and their quality is like a status symbol, you know. It’s better to have more than less, better to have divines than apostles, and better to have chief gods than stray gods. There’s more value that way. In

that sense, given that you have the hegemony in this world, you're pretty valuable."

"Have the hegemony?"

Was he talking about the match with Sophia and Anbaal? I lost though.

"Well, there were some developments far beyond expectations, but in the end you gained a lot of 『Authorities』, so it's fine to say you have the hegemony in this world. What's important is the result, not the process, so I don't care who you guys decided won and lost."

It's true that because I lost the match and had a lot of work pushed onto me, I had the most 『Authorities』 of us three gods.

"And so, since I saw you working so hard, I thought that I'd give you a little reward."

"Like I said, reward?"

"Yep. So anyway, about the reward in question… if you want, I can turn you back into a human, and teleport you to Earth."

imouto
————————!?

imouto
Hearing these completely unexpected words, I caught my breath.
I can turn back into a human? And not just that, I can go back to my original world?

"Not a bad offer, right? Either way, it'd normally be an impossible reward. If you don't take it now, there won't be a second time, okay?"

The Evil God spoke as though pressing me for an answer, but my mind was in so much chaos that I couldn't really comprehend his words. I tried desperately to calm myself down, and voiced my doubt.

“Even though your objective was to create a kin, is it okay for you to turn me back into a human?”

From our conversation just now, his goal was to create high quality kin, and I achieved that by turning into a divine. But now he was saying that he would turn me back into a human as a reward, and I could only see it as putting the cart before the horse.

“I say turning you back into a human, but strictly speaking it’s splitting your 『Divine Self』 and your 『Human Self』 I guess. Just leaving the 『Divine You』 is plenty as my kin.”

I have no idea how he’d even do something like that, but looking at how casually he said it, he probably really can.
I’ll be able to return to being a human…?

“If the 『Divine You』 stays in this world as my kin, I don’t really need the 『Human You』. Like I said earlier, if you want, I’ll teleport you to Earth.”

Not only returning to being a human, but I’ll even be able to return to my old world…
Up until now, I tried not to really think about it, but the moment I heard his words, it brought up the memories of my family and friends in my old world, and immediately the feelings of nostalgia and longing──

“However, it’ll be a one-way transfer of course. After I teleport you to Earth, I won’t accept you wanting to come back here.”

It felt like cold water had been poured over me.
Wait, that’s…

“Of course, I can’t teleport anybody other than you to Earth. If you choose Earth, then you’ll be saying goodbye to the people here.”

If I return to my old world, then I won’t ever be able to see Tena, Leonora or Lili again. If I cross over to another world, you could call that much obvious, but that reality stabbed deeply into my heart.

My friends and family in my old world, or the people that I met in this world? If I chose one, I had to abandon the other.

I closed my eyes and in my mind I weighed the two on a scale.
The people I spent many months and years with in my old world, and the people I had a short, but meaningful time with in this world.
It was painful to choose either one, and I couldn't come to a decision.

imouto
…That's how it should have been.
But despite that, the scales in my heart tipped with unnatural ease in one direction.

imouto
It really is strange.
Even a while ago when I heard that I could go back to my old world, mysteriously the nostalgia didn't gush out.
Something was weird. Something important and defining was wrong.

Right. I can't just eat up this Evil God's words. That was the mistake I made last time too.
I still don't know if he intentionally misinterpreted my words, but everything began when he granted my wish in a warped way.
This time it was his suggestion, but there was plenty of risk that he meant something different than what I thought.

Now that I was calm, I thought back on the conversation thus far, and checked to see if there was anything weird.

"Now then, which world will you pick? Earth, or thi──"

"Why?"

"Eh?"

Discovering what was wrong, I cut off his words.

"Why did you not say──

imouto
──『return you to your old world』, and say 『teleport you to Earth』 instead?"

"…"

The constant mocking smile from the Evil God's face disappeared, and he turned expressionless.

Thinking about it, from the moment that we met, he never once mentioned taking me from somewhere else.
I had naturally thought that I had been taken right after the last memories of 『my old world』, so I hadn't particularly noticed.

Also, I was supposed to have been suddenly taken away from my friends and family, and then sent to another world, so normally you'd expect that I'd want to return, but for some reason I never had that feeling, and even when I heard that I would be able to meet them, I didn't feel any longing.

And there was one more thing. Right now, I was wearing clothes.*Even though last time I was naked.* I can't imagine that the Evil God in front of me was the type who would go out of his way to strip me, so that naturally brings up the question of why I was naked the first time.
imouto
imouto
"Tell me one thing? Is the 『me』 in 『my old world』 doing well?"

imouto
imouto
"……Huhu, AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

When I questioned him, the expressionless Evil God suddenly roared with laughter.

"Ahahaha, I'm beat. It's my loss. Good job noticing, hey? Even though plenty of the humans I'd met so far couldn't accept it even if they noticed the possibility."

Aah, his words just verified everything.
I wasn't born in 『my old world』…

"Yeah, you're a flesh and memory copy of a girl born in the 『old world』 that you call 『Earth』, and you were something that I created. It's easier to create kin who end up as divines that way, you see. Incidentally, the girl that was your original is living life normally and doing just fine."

The reason I was naked last time was because I was literally "naked as the day I was born". It wasn't that I was taken there, but that I was born there, so of course I had no clothes.

"In other words, even if I went to my 『old world』 …or rather, even if I went to Earth…"

"There wouldn't be anywhere that you belonged, and nobody would be waiting for you either."

My original on Earth was already there, so of course. Even if I went there, at best I'd just be treated as a doppelganger.

"If I hadn't noticed and chose to 『teleport to Earth』, what would you have done?"

"I wouldn't have cared, and would've 『teleported you to Earth』 just as you wanted."

That was so close… I almost got trapped by an option that would turn out terribly no matter what.

"Why did you try and trap me like that?"

I asked the Evil God as I glared at him. Even if I glared at him, naturally the effect of my mystic eyes weren't even a gentle breeze to him.

"Guess you could call it the final test before your reward."

"Reward…"

Is that thing still valid? But since I only just avoided that nasty trap, I can't help but look at him with suspicious eyes.

"No, no, this time I'm serious."

His level of credibility was already zero, but for now I decided to hear him out first before choosing, so I prompted him to continue.

"Having said that though, the reward is the same as before. The second half is gone though."

What I heard earlier was "change me back to human, and teleport me to Earth". If the second half was gone, then did he mean that he would grant me just "returning to a human"?

"Of course, it's a reward so I won't force you. I'll give you the choice, so you can choose whatever you want."

Certainly, it was a reward worth considering.
When I first became a divine it didn't really feel real, and I tried not to think about it, but over the last year the difference between 『god』 and 『human』 has been getting big. Leaving the Apostle Race Tena aside, Leonora and Lili are both going to age, and eventually die, but only us two are going to be left behind.
If I said that I didn't want to spend time together with everyone as a human, then it would be a lie.

But because of what happened just now, I couldn't just simply nod either.

"Doesn't it have any demerits?"

Leaving aside differences in interpretation aside, if I asked him questions he would answer, and up until now he had never lied before. I proactively questioned him to see if there was anything out of place in order to pick the better option.

"Demerits? Let's see… Mn?"

The Evil God looked like he was thinking, but he seemed to notice something, because he turned his gaze to my side. I was lured by his reaction too, so I turned to face that way but in the darkness I didn't see anyt… no, wait, just as I noticed a streak of light running vertically, a strong light suddenly shone in from there.
Getting a bad feeling, I reflexively moved my body away from the line of light.
And when I did, in the very next instant, a beam of light shot in from it, flying past me far into the distance.

"Anri! Are you all right!?"

"I thought I was going to die…"

Where the line of light used to be was a hole from which Sophia charged in with sword in hand. Honestly, I don't even know what would have happened to me if I hadn't evaded it.

"Ain't ya doin' just fine?"

"I almost got blown away."

It's true that I don't have a single scratch though.
I replied to Anbaal who appeared next, but it seemed that he didn't know what I was talking about.

"Anri-sama, are you all right!?"

"Are you okay!? …!?"

"Hii!?"

Next, Tena, Leonora, and Lili jumped into that dark space as well, but the moment they met eyes with the Evil God, Leonora immediately fell into a dogeza, and Lili hide behind Tena and clung to her. But well, if they can't deal with my eyes, then it can't be helped that they can't deal with his.

"Though I am late, I hastened to your side. Please command me as you will."

Last to appear was Imperial Death, clad in a jet black robe, and standing between the Evil God and I. His scythe was already in hand, and he was prepared for battle.

imouto
imouto
It seems that everybody ran here worried for me but… things were basically over already.

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“Although you were pretty close, to think that you even chased her in here.”

For now I calmed everybody down, and we sat around a table the Evil God prepared to continue the conversation.
After explaining what happened so far to everyone, the Evil God let out that line.

“We had Anri’s kin Tena, so we were able to find this place by following the master-servant bond. After that was just a bet on whether or not we could open a hole though.”

“I handed my power over to that overly serious woman, and with two gods’ worth, we finally got in here.”

I’m glad that they did that much to reach me, but I wished that they would remember that following the link meant that I was at the other end of the hole.

“Leaving her friend and kin over there aside, to think that you two would go that far to save her.”

“Of course. It would be troubling for us without her.”

“We finally got a person to push- …to entrust the work to after all. If she suddenly disappeared, we’d be troubled, yanno.”

When they jumped in they seemed seriously worried for me, but although that wasn't the only reason, let's leave that all aside. I'm a little shy.

"About the thing earlier, if I turn back into a human, what's going to happen to Tena and him as my kin?"

Tena turned into my kin from when I gave her the divine protection, but when I turned into a divine she turned into an apostle with me.
Imperial Death became my kin when I gave him my divine protection as the No Life King, but at the time he wasn't this outstanding. I think he broke through the barrier when I turned into a divine too.
Both of them were affected my by change into a divine. In that case, what would happen if I returned to being a human?

"Your kin will end up choosing either the 『Divine You』 or the 『Human You』. If they picked the 『Divine You』, they stay as they are. If they pick the 『Human you』, they'll probably return to from before you became a divine."

"If I choose the 『Human Me』, will I lose my connection with the 『Divine Me』? What about the other way around?"

"They won't be directly related, but it won't change the fact that the 『Human You』 is a part of the 『Divine You』. Once your life as a human ends, your soul will unify with the 『Divine You』. In that sense, no matter which you pick, there won't be much of a difference in a hundred years."

In other words, it's the difference between whether we continue to live as divine and apostle, or whether we live a lifetime as a human first?
From a glance there didn't seem to be any demerits, but since he had zero credibility, I decided to ask the observers.

"Was everything he said true, Sophia?"

"I have never seen a precedent, but I believe the theory is correct. Normally becoming a human from a divine would be impossible, but as somebody who turned into a divine from a human, and who still retains their flesh body, you are an exception. If I were to add another comment, the 『Divine

You』 separated from the 『Human You』 would become a purer existence as a divine. We don't understand kin as being a status symbol, but having a purer kin should be more valuable for him."

Hearing that and turning to the Evil God, he immediately averted his eyes. It seems that he purposefully avoided mentioning the merits for himself, but if it was just that much, you couldn't call it a demerit for me, so I guess it didn't matter?

"If I choose to return to being a human, what will you two do?"

"I…"

I asked Tena and Imperial Death. Tena seemed at a loss as to how to reply. I wanted to live with her, but I thought that it was something she should decide on herself.

"I think I really will choose the 『Human Anri-sama』 after all. I think that I would be useful in helping her with her everyday needs after all."

"I see. What about you?"

After hearing Tena's reply, I turned to Imperial Death next.

"I shall serve the 『Anri-sama as a God』. As an undead to begin with, I feel it would be better than serving by the side of the 『Anri-sama as a Human 』."

He replied unwaveringly. To begin with, he was somebody who worshipped the Evil God, so it was probably an obvious choice.

imouto
imouto
imouto
"Now then, guess that's settled. It's about to time to ask you what you've chosen. Are you going to live as a 『God』, or as a 『Human』?"

After hearing the wishes of my kin, I was asked for an answer by the Evil God.

“I…”

Next up, the final chapter.

Also, it will not be a multi-choice ending. There is only one route.

TL: Odd God, or 『変神』 is read as ‘henjin’ – it sounds exactly the same as for the word 変人 (weirdo), so it’s basically the same as calling her a weirdo.

Chapter 20 – The Regular Anri

“I… want to live as a human.”

To begin with, what I wanted was to live in peace. I had already come to terms with turning into a divine, but if I was told that I could take back my life as a human, as I thought, I really did want it.
From what I heard, it was just a temporary thing and I would eventually become a divine, but I can just think of it as a bit of time to have fun before the real thing.
If I can spend time with Tena, Lili and Leonora, then there isn’t any reason to choose otherwise.

“I see. Well then, I’ll separate you, so stand over there.”

I obeyed his words, and stood up from the round table, moving a little distance away.

“Well then, here we go.”

Together with his words, I closed my eyes in preparation for the shock. But there wasn’t any shock like I expected, and instead I felt something leave from all around my entire body.

“Okay, done.”

Opening my eyes at his words, in front of me stood a person who was my spitting image.
No, rather than saying that, I suppose it might be better to call them the other me.
I opened my mouth to say something to the 『me』 who I had pushed the position and responsibilities of a god onto, but before I could, something strange happened.

O-, Oww… For some reason my limbs had a dull pain.

“For some reason it hurts.”

“I wonder if it’s growth pains. When you turned into a divine you stopped growing, but now you’re getting a whole year’s worth.”

When I muttered, the Evil God explained it to me.
It’s true that I didn’t grow while I was a divine, but I was a whole year older in that time. Normally I should have grown a little. If I suddenly made up for it all at once, it wouldn’t be strange for it to hurt.
It’s not a sharp pain, but a dull one.

“Are you okay, Tena?”

Tena who had become an apostle was the same in that she stopped growing. No, since I was closer to fully-grown, it should have hurt for her even more. Getting worried about her, I called out to her, and she answered while enduring the pain.

“Y-, Yes… My limbs and chest hurt, but I can bear with this much.”

Chest? Now that I looked closer, Tena certainly was holding her chest in pain. Why? Even though I didn’t feel anything at all…
I found everyone giving me a lukewarm and slightly pitiful look, so for now I decided to hold my chest as well… The gazes became even more lukewarm. Why.

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It still hurt, but it was feeling a lot better, so I decided to continue our first encounter.
I looked again at the 『Me as a God』 standing before my eyes. Her face, stature and clothing were the spitting image of me, but she really did seem to have a different sort of presence somehow. The girl in front of me was a purer divine, so I suppose that was natural though.

“I’ve ended up pushing everything onto you, but…”

“Don’t worry about it. In the end, your memories and feelings will end up back with me. Go enjoy your life as a human.”

Both of us were me, so a fight might have been inevitable, but hearing 『Me as a God』 say that made the guilt ease up a little.

“Got it. Anyway, there’s something I’d like to discuss…”

“?”

The 『Me as a God』 looked blankly at me. I wondered if this was how I looked to everyone else, and started feeling a little embarrassed.

“Give me money.”

“……”

This was probably the first time I’ve been stared at by myself, huh.
But I need to properly explain myself. When I was a divine, eating was nothing but a hobby, and I didn’t need to pay money for clothes or shelter either, but now that I was a human again, I wouldn’t be able to live without it.
The 『Me as a God』 would probably continue to live in the temple, but if I was going to enjoy my lifetime as a human, then I couldn’t just stay holed up in the temple forever. Because of that, whether I was buying my own home, or staying at an inn, money was needed.
Whether our fortune right now belonged to the 『Me as a God』 or the 『Me as a Human』 was difficult to say, but the money earned by the 『Me as a God』 was greater, so I’d be at a disadvantage if I didn’t take action right now. I needed to win this negotiation right here. She opened her mouth.

“7:3”

“Who gets the 7?”

“Me of course.”

“That’s way too unbalanced. To begin with, you don’t even need that much money as a god. 5:5”

“That’s taking too much. It was money earned as the Evil God. 6:4”

The battle of negotiation continued for a while, but mn, as expected of 『me』. She was a tough foe.
In the end, it was agreed that I would be taking 4/10 of our fortune, and in exchange I also got the Holy Sword, Holy Spear, and Holy Bow.
Having said that though, now that the match with Sophia and Anbaal was over, I’d be giving them back to the Heroes with conditions attached. I gained the right to giving the Heroes conditions──orders──you could say.

“You truly are a…”

“Well, she’s the one with tha 『Greed』 Authority after all.”

“Anri-sama…”

“……”

“Ahahaha, you really are funny.”

While we were absorbed in negotiating, the people around us gave incredibly astonished stares.
Incidentally, Leonora was falling into a dogeza as usual, while Lili still hid behind Tena. Now that there were two people with mystic eyes here, apparently it became difficult to avoid.

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“There are two Anri-samas!? Have my prayers borne fruit?”

“Calm down.”

And what the heck were you praying for.

No matter where I decided to live, as long as I looked just like the 『Me as a God』, various problems would occur if I didn't meet the Pope first, so I went to meet him, but the very moment that he saw there were two of us he went as said *that*.
Well, I say 'meet', but in a sense we already knew each other, so it was mainly telling him the circumstances, but it felt like I was going to be exhausted from the very beginning.
"I see. I understand the situation now. In other words, the 『Anri-sama as a God』 will continue to bless the temple with her presence, while the 『Anri-sama as a Human』 will be living in the worldly realm."

"Worldly r-…

In the sense of separating the world that the humans lived in from the world of the gods, it wasn't an incorrect expression, but I'm not sure how to feel about using 'worldly realm' to describe a place that's just a floor below this one.

"Now then, where will you be living? If necessary, I could prepare a room on the 3rd floor, but…"

I sank into thought for a while.
Living in the temple wasn't an option. If I did so, then nothing would change. Having said that though, as a person who looks just like the Evil God, the risk of living in this town would be high in various ways. Even if I took it as a 'as long as nobody finds out, there's no problems' issue, it would probably be better to be safe than sorry.
I suppose the best idea might be to build an estate or something a little distance from town.
Thankfully I had the money needed, as well as the workers.

"I'll build an estate outside of town and live there. Could I trouble you to prepare the architects, and a place for me to stay until the construction is finished?"

"Understood. I shall immediately make the preparations. Please use the room on the 3rd floor until the construction is complete."

Having said that, the Pope hurriedly left the audience room and left.

“Now then, guess it’s about time to leave.”

“Got it. If anything comes up, contact me.”

I’ve got my luggage after all, and I’ve got the 40% of the money too. I’m all ready to depart. Well, though I say depart, until the estate is finished I’ll still be staying in a room in the temple or in an inn in this town though.
If it was just for that long, then I get the feeling that it wouldn’t matter even if I just stayed *here*, but I think it would be best to make the distinction after all. It wouldn’t be good to prolong things and stay here.
Also, in regards to the Holy Sword, the Holy Spear, and the Holy Bow, for a while we dealt with their rampage by keeping them in a sealed room, but thinking about it, it would just be fine if I chucked it into my item box, or so I realised. Well, I’m leaving with them now so it’s too late to matter though.
I left the room, and called out to the three waiting for me.

“Tena, Lili, Leonora… Are you ready to leave?”

“Yes, everything is fine.”

“Yes.”

“Yeah, I’m fine too.”

These three were going to leave the temple with me. But since Leonora was originally in this country as a point of contact with the Demon Race Nation, rather than living with us, the plan was to go back and forth between the estate and the temple.

Having left the audience room, I took the stairs down from the 4th floor, and headed into the 3rd floor.
This was a floor open to the followers, so up until now I basically never stepped foot here. I thought about the chaos that would occur if the god they worshipped casually descended, so I opted not to come here, but now that I was a human again, there probably wasn’t any problem.
The only follower who had met me directly was the Pop, so it’s impossible

that they all knew exactly what I looked like. There might have been people who saw me when I became a divine, but it was a year ago and they saw me from afar too, so there shouldn't be any problems there either.

"Speaking of which, are you still carrying that doll?"

"Well, it's because you wouldn't take it away from me… Can't you do so already?"

Leonora had been carrying the doll ever since. It was already something normal in everyone's minds, so I secretly felt that it might be fine to continue like this.
Also, even if she told me to take it away──

"It's impossible. I can't take it off you anymore."

"Hah!? What do you mean?"

"The only one who can remove it is the 『Me as a God』. Now that I'm a human again, I can't take it off you."

Right. The only reason I overcame the curse was because I became a divine. Now that I was a human again, I couldn't do anything about the doll anymore.
Mn? Just now I feel like I overlooked something really important.

"Wait, then does that mean I have to stay like this forever?"

"If it was the 『Me as a God』 then they could probably take it off you, but we only just left the temple, so I won't go back there for now. It suits you, so why not just stay that way?"

"Please spare me…"

Leonora's shoulders drooped, crestfallen. But well, if I feel like it, I'll contact the 『Me as a God』 and have her take it away. If I feel like it, that is.

imouto

While we were chatting, we made it as far as the large doors of the 3rd floor entrance. What lay beyond here was in a sense the first step into a new life. With a little expectation and anxiety in my heart, I opened the doors.
Beyond the doors was a large room, and a few people moving about. They heard the sound of the door open, and in reflex, they stopped what they were doing to look our way.
I unconsciously winced at having lots of gazes on me, but since I was a human again meaning they weren't particularly focused on me, I pulled myself together.

imouto
imouto
imouto
──But in the next instant, everybody in the room fell into dogeza together.

Why? Or so I wondered, but an idea immediately came to me, and I checked my status in a panic.

"Status."

imouto
Name: Anri
Race: Human Race [OLD]
Sex: Female
Age: 18
Job: Mage [OLD]
Level: 1
Title: Evil Person of Fearful Trembling, Dungeon Master, Weirdo
Mana: 3031504
Skills:
– Evil God Aura (Lv.5)
– Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority (Lv.5)
– Divine Enchantment (Lv.7)
– Abnormal Status Resistance (Lv.6)
– Darkness Magic (Lv.6)
– Item Box (Lv.4)
– Dungeon Create (Lv.7)
Equipment:

– Fan of Calamity
– Dress of the Black Death Rose
– Babydoll of Depravity
– Scanties of the Succubus
– Pumps of Darkness
Kin:
– Tena [OLD]

imouto
So the skills really did just get left behind…
I thought that these unsuitable Evil God skills that were planted in me to turn me into a divine would disappear as well, but I just returned to how I was before I became a divine.
Or rather, thinking about it, Tena is my kin, so it made sense that I would still have my divine enchantment. I should have noticed earlier.
But more importantly, the return of my titles was really half-assed.
『Evil God of Fearful Trembling(戦慄の邪神)』 turned into
『Evil Person of Fearful Trembling(戦慄の邪人)』, and
『Odd God(変神; henjin)』 turned into
『Weirdo(変人; henjin)』.
Didn't they do nothing but replace 『God(神)』 with 『Human(人)』?
Or rather, who the hell are you calling 『Weirdo』.

Still irritated, I struck at the status screen with the fan in my hand, but of course it just passed through, and the words didn't change.
At that moment, I suddenly noticed that I had a fan in hand, and started to get a bad feeling.

I placed the fan down, and picked up a paper-knife from atop a nearby desk.
…And in the very next moment, the fan leapt up from the ground, and knocked the paper-knife from my hand.

Aah, I knew it…
It seems that because I returned to being a human, the curse that I should have conquered went back to how it was before. Am I going to return to the lifestyle of wearing nothing but the one outfit again?

"Anri, what's wrong?"

Seeing me troubled, Leonora still with doll in hand, spoke to me in worry.
Right, so *that* was what I felt was out-of-place. If I couldn't undo the curse on the doll, then of course the same thing would happen with my equipment.
Is this my punishment for saying that Leonora should hold onto the doll for a while?
Curses are like chickens; they always come home to roost. This was a pretty weird curse though.
imouto
I spent a while after that with my head in my arms, but in the end there was nothing I could do about it, and decided to just think of it as going back to what was normal before.
More importantly was the issue of what to do with the people around me still in dogeza.

Normal people would just run away when they see my eyes, so did the fact that they were in dogeza mean that they were more emotionally strong than average? Or could it be that because they spent all that time in this country that they got used to the power of the Evil God?
Either way, given that floors 1 to 3 were open to the public, and the 3rd floor was the top floor among then, these people were probably important members of the Thearchy. If it was them, then I had thought that it might be fine to tell them about the 『Me as a God』 issue that I just explained to the Pope, but since there were a lot of people here, I couldn't say for sure that there wouldn't be rumours spread.
In that case, there was one answer…

"Strategic retreat."

The ancient Chinese had the 36 Strategems, and the best of them all was the retreat. While everybody is still facing down in their dogeza, we'll fake it and pretend that it wasn't us. It's not too late to play it off as their imagination …I wish.
Thankfully this was still inside the dungeon, so I could use teleport. I had really actually wanted to physically take the first step into my new life, but it couldn't be helped.
Having concluded as such, I activated the teleport circle, and together with the three of them, I immediately moved to the temple entrance.

Thankfully we teleported somewhere out of sight, so the worry about being surrounded by people all of a sudden ended without a problem.

“D-, Don’t just suddenly teleport us.”

“That surprised me.”

“Uu…”

Leonora, Tena and Lili complained to me about being suddenly teleported, but it couldn’t be helped in that situation. I paid them no heed, and had a peek through the temple entrance. It wasn’t as though there was nobody around at all, but there weren’t too many people. If we walked out now, we wouldn’t be noticed.

“Let’s go.”

“Honestly…”

“Yes.”

“Understood.”

With Leonora, Lili and Tena, I passed through the temple door.

imouto
imouto
It was just about noon, and the high sun shone down brightly on our surroundings.
It was warm, but there was a cool wind blowing, so it didn’t feel too bad.
Breathing in the first fresh air in a while felt incredibly refreshing.

imouto
…Huh? Could it be that this was the very first time I’ve been outside since becoming a divine a year ago?
No, no, that kind of thing can’t be… can’t be… actually, it might be.

imouto

Shuddering at the realisation that I'd become a hikikomori, I suddenly noticed something odd in sight, and turned my attention to it.
There was some kind of construction going on next to the temple, and it looked like some kind of huge building was being built. But it looked somehow different to normal buildings. It wasn't all that wide, but the height was about half of the temple's. What's more, since they were in the middle of construction, it seemed like it was going to be even taller.

"Tena, do you know what that is?"

Amongst the four of us, the one most knowledgable of the Thearchy's situation was Tena, so I decided to try asking her. Tena tilted her head at my question, looked towards the construction site from just now, and then nodded before replying.

"Eh? Aah, that construction job over there? Mr. Pope said that he was erecting a statue of you, Anri-sama."

He seriously went ahead with that!?
If that thing gets built I won't be able to hide my ties to the 『Me as a God』 no matter how hard I try.
No, but, the only one who really knows my face is the Pope, and if the workers haven't seen me, the statue shouldn't look all too alike…

"I heard that Mr. Pope designed the blueprints himself, you know? I had the chance to see it as well, but the drawings were splendid and looked exactly like you, Anri-sama! That person is quite good with drawing too, isn't he."

"Yeah, that drawing certainly was amazing."

Don't suddenly display your talents in needless areas.
I want them to stop this very moment, but from what I can see, the Evil God Statue has advanced too far to call it off already.
A plan as large as that was basically a national project already, and if I called it off halfway, I wouldn't be able to avoid affecting various parts of the Thearchy.

“I heard that the completed statue is planned to be as tall as the temple. I’m sure that there is a good chance it will be visible even from the neighbouring Kingdom.”

I’ve decided. Before the statue is complete, I’m going to get as far away from it as possible. And then I’m going to live in hiding.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
I thought that this time for sure, I would be living a normal life as a human, but it seems that I really am destined for drama.

imouto
Even so, even back when I turned into an Evil God, I tried my best in order to smile together with everyone.

imouto
So that’s why now that I’m a human again, there’s no reason that I can’t try my best as well.

imouto
One day, when I return to the other me, so that I can tell her that I lived my life to the fullest,

imouto
I’ll continue to walk ahead, not as the Evil God, but as the regular Anri.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
“Speaking of which, Anri, what is that?”

“The original Black Scripture. I accidentally brought it with me.”

◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

<Former Evil God, Anri>

She erected an estate on the border between the Kingdom of Fortera and the Holy Anri Thearchy, and lived there together with Tena and Lili.
Additionally, those that knew of the estate referred to it as the “Black Rose Mansion”, but because the plans were left to the Pope, it ended up as an outrageously large palace.
Although some troubling issues would occur from time to time, on the whole, she was able to spend the life peacefully as she desired.
In addition, she had kept with her the authority as Dungeon Master when the two were separated, so the 『Anri as a God』 was troubled, but she had not yet noticed.
Because the Evil God Statue made her face widely known, recently she had taken to wearing a mask.

“Why does it feel like people are staring at me?”

imouto
<Former Apostle, Tena>

She served Anri after she returned to being a human, and continued to look after her everyday needs.
Although she had always been hesitant at meeting the family that sold her to the slave merchants, she succeeded in bringing herself to meet with them, and they reconciled.
A while after she had begun living at the Black Rose Mansion, she met a single young man by chance, and ended up involved in the turmoil that followed.

“Anri-sama, I’ve made some tea.”

imouto
<Former Slave, Lili>

She lived together with Anri in the estate.
Lately, she had begun to imitate her sister-figure, Tena, and started to learn housework.
Perhaps because she was used to them, she could now look at Anri's mystic eyes without running away.

"Anri-sama, Tena-oneechan, the food is ready."

imouto
<Magic Flame Princess, Leonora>

With the achievement of establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy Anri Thearchy, she inherited the throne of the Demon King at a young age.
She became the mediator for the two nations, and was adored by even the humans, who were originally the enemy.
In addition, due to the fact that she was forced to continue holding the doll and was unable to part from it, she gained alias such as "Doll Princess" and "The Truth Is, the Doll Is Her Real Body" etc.

"I told you that was wrong, didn't I!?"

imouto
<Pope Harvin>

As usual, today he was also merrily spreading the religion.
He was extremely delighted by the completed giant Evil God Statue.
Lately he had been planning to mass produce small-scale Evil God statues to distribute amongst the followers.

"Hu hu hu, it seems that the Grassroots Anri-sama Plan is progressing just fine."

imouto
<Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc>
<Guardian Sword, Zio>
<Magic Flame, Frey>
<Fresh Breeze, Widdi>

In order to retrieve the Holy Sword from Anri, they were worked to the bone on the construction of the estate.
Additionally, Arc was still in Anri's grasp, the party members were wrapped up as well
Since Arc had lost interest in the Demon King subjugation, they came to a standstill.

"I-, I can't stand any more construction work…"

"Agreed, Frey."

"She seeeriously worked us to the bone, huh?"

"She was an amazing person, wasn't she…"

imouto
<Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel>
<Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine>

Together with Arc, Anri made them help with the construction work in exchange for their Holy Spear and Bow.
While labouring together, a love between them… did not bud at all, and it was just more of Lionel's one-sided approaches.

"Heyy, how 'bout you go out with me already?"

"Just give it up already, Lionel."

imouto
<Demon King, Eligor Romariel>

Passing the throne of Demon King to his daughter, Leonora, he lived as he liked as an adventurer.
He continued to challenged the "Holy Land of the Evil God" dungeon.
It seems that he was actually quite frustrated about failing to capture the dungeon.

"Mu, I thought that today would work out for sure, but…"

imouto
<Violent Gale Knight, Renarve>
<Bloodfrost General, Vikuto>

As members of the Four Heavenly Kings, they served the new Demon King, Leonora.

“I wonder if His Majesty the Preceding King is doing well.”

“It would not be strange for *anything* to happen to that personage.”
imouto
<Adamantite Earth Demon, Ijido>

With his bald patch healed, he returned to work.

“I’m not fucken bald!”

imouto
imouto
<Evil God Anri>

On the top floor of the Evil God Temple, she continued to administrate the world.
On occasion, she would observe her human self.

“That mask, so cool…”

imouto
<Light God Sophia>
<Dark God Anbaal>
Even after the end of the match, for some reason they continued to live in the Evil God Temple.
Their intentions were unknown, but thanks to that, Evil God Anri’s loneliness was lessened.

“I will not speak badly of you, so please stop your spying at once.”

“Seriously. Damn nasty hobby.”

imouto
<Black Dragon Vardneel>
He learnt “come”.

“Gurururu…”

imouto
<Armour of the Evil God, Anril Armour>
Unit 1 continued to work hard as the 20th floor boss.
The newly summoned Unit 2 was working hard as the guard-armour of the Black Rose Mansion.
Also, unlike Unit 1, Unit 2 was made with a female’s armour as a base.

“……”

“……”

imouto
<The Emperor Who Transcends Death, Imperial Death>

Because of the lack of invaders on the 30th floor, normally he served as Evil God Anri’s aide on the top floor of the Evil God Temple.
Due to Tena’s absence and the resultant lack of anybody to do the housework, the residents of the top floor were about to fall into a crisis in various meanings, but because of his existence as a being with hundreds of years experience, the crisis was averted.
The cooking for the three Gods who ate despite the lack of need were prepared by him as well.
Due to Tena’s absence, the only ones left who could pilot the Anril Armour were Evil God Anri and himself, but in exchange, they came up with the idea of piloting the armour while riding atop Black Dragon Vardneel; the final form, Anril Deathrider. In addition, it goes without saying that he was stronger just by himself.

“I offer my Lord my eternal loyalty.”

imouto
<Evil God (?)>

Today as well, he was floating about in the “Interval”.
On occasion he would suddenly appear in the Evil God Temple, cause trouble for Evil God Anri and the others, and then get kicked out.

“Now then, what should I play with next?”

And with the above chapter concludes the Evil God Average main story.
After this, I intend in submitting side stories with breaks between each, but *Anri’s story* ends here.
Thank you for your various opinions along the way, but I truly believe that I made it this far due to the support of all the readers.
For reading this, and for your support, thank you very much.
Also, I intend on reporting on my activities, but for now I will make a small announcement below.

◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

A world governed by a Light God, a Dark God, and a slightly ‘my pace’ Evil God.

The religion that boasted the most power in the world, the Church of Sacred Light, had suddenly lost its influence.

The panicking upper echelons of the church decided to perform the Hero Summoning Ritual, as a sign of their revival.

However, due to the intervention of an even *more* ‘my pace’ Evil God, the summoned young man was granted a troublesome skill.
Followed about by turmoil, the young man met a certain girl, and together they opposed the absurdity of the world.

imouto
Set in the world of “Evil God Average” comes a new story. Coming So…metime or Other.

First of all, thank you for reading my translations. As always, your enthusiasm for the story and interesting comments give me the impetus to continue translating.
Second of all, my apologies for the delay on the final chapter. It was longer than expected, and I was unable to complete it last night.
Third, Evil God Average came out in Japan today. You can purchase it here, http://www.cdjapan.co.jp/product/NEOBK-1855809
and if you have money to spare, ***please, please buy a copy to support Kitaseno-sensei.*** *It really isn't all that expensive, and is basically a family pizza meal, or about 3 subway footlongs.*
Kitaseno-sensei worked hard to keep the story amusing, and they're continuing to write even now, so please just spare a little snack money or beer money and buy a copy. It comes with pictures, and you can keep it on your shelf to pretend you're all international and cultured. It's a conversation starter too!
Imagine this; your friend comes over, and goes, ***"Whoa! You can read Japanese?"*** *and with a proud smile, you throw out your chest and reply;****"Nope. I bought for the pictures."***
Finally, *the spin-off came out today. Naturally I have picked it up. Because it takes place 1~2 years after the conclusion of Evil God Average, the first thing is to translate the Book of God side stories, as they almost all take place after this chapter.*

KITASENO YUNAKI-SENSEI INTERVIEWS ANRI – CHARACTER BATON

SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 GRAND ARBITER, ESTELION SHARLULU ASHEEL VINCHANCE CELENALIA DI EF FALUFILUU'LUUFILAAFEE (THE 35TH) 23 COMMENTS

Thank you as always for your support.
This is Kitaseno Yunaki.

It's a bit sudden, but I've been passed the Character Baton from Amano Hazama-sensei of 『The Simple Job of Being Destroyed By the Hero』 fame. It's my first time being invited in this way, so there was the problem of "To begin with, what on earth is a Character Baton?", but since he went out of the way to nominate me, I decided to do it.
It seems that the other authors interview their main characters, but I'm not suited for that kind of role, so I'll stick to narrating, and entrust the interviewing to Miss Leonora.

"Hah? O-, Oi… Wait a moment!?"

Leonora was shocked by the sudden mission, but she was too late, and Kitaseno Yunaki had already disappeared like mist. In exchange, she could hear a voice from goodness knows where.

"Wha-!? You've already begun the narration!? Youuuu, it's only at times like these that you work fast! …Well, whatever. Anri, you there?"

"You call?"

Leonora called out, and Anri suddenly appeared from somewhere.

"Umu, I'm reluctant, but since I was already entrusted with this, there is no choice. I am going to begin the interview."

"So bothersome…"

“I AM GO ING TO BE GIN!”

“Roger.”

Anri had responded sluggishly, but seeing Leonora smile with veins appearing on her forehead, Anri reluctantly accepted the interview.

1. Introductions

“Ahem! Well then, I suppose we should begin with your introduction.”

Pulling herself back together, Leonora asked the first question. Anri gave a nod in reply, and began to introduce herself.

“My name is Anri, 17 years old. I’m female, and I’m 158cm tall. Weight is a secret. Bloodtype AB.”

“What about your three sizes?”

“(¯―¯-¯―¯) Chudon.”

Leonora looked at Anri’s breast as she asked in teasing, but Anri paid her back with a darkness bullet. She added on a cute sounding “chudon” sound effect, but there was actually enough power to crush a boulder, so it was really not a laughing matter.
The darkness bullet flew towards Leonora’s chest, and after frantically dodging, she somehow managed to avoid it.

“Uwah!? A-, Are you trying to kill me!”

“Big tit girls are the target(teki).”

“Who’s a 『target(teki)』! At least say 『enemy(teki)』!”

2. Your preferred type

“Honestly… I knew this was going to be a difficult job from the start. Next is your preferred type, I guess.”

Leonora angrily remarked in a huff, but changing gears, she moved onto the next question.

“My preferred type?”

“Well, I suppose in this case it refers to your preference in the opposite sex. I haven’t heard any love gossip about you at all but… how is that?”

At Leonora’s act, Anri folded her arms and thought for a little.

“…Rugged, older gentlemen?” (shibui)
“Oh? How unexpected. Is there anybody in particular like that?”

Hearing the answer that Anri came to, Leonora smiled and asked in great interest. However, her question would lead to an unexpected disturbance.

“Ojisama I guess.”

In that moment, Leonora’s smile cramped. The reason being that there was only one person that Anri referred to as “Ojisama”.

“Huh? Wai-, Wait a moment! By Ojisama, you can’t mean…”

3. Things you like about yourself

“Oi, don’t just casually move onto the next question! The earlier topic was more important, right!”

Leonora tried to question Anri after her bombshell announcement, but tragically, it was time for the next question.

“Next question.”

“Tsk, it can’t be helped. I’ll have you tell me about this in detail later, you know. The next question is what you like about yourself.”

“Everything but eyes and aura.” (me to kehai igai)

Time taken to respond: 0.5 seconds

“T-, That sure was immediate…”

“It’s important after all.”

4. Things you’d like to change about yourself

“Eyes and aura.”

“Again with an immediate answer… Or rather, if you don’t let me ask you the question, I’ll lose my standing.”

At last, the time taken to respond had gone beyond zero, and ended up in the negatives. It wasn’t even an interview anymore.

“You should have known what my answer was the moment it became this question.”

“Well, that’s true, but…”

“Just how much hardship have I faced because of these eyes?”

Saying that, Anri pointed at them.
And here, Leonora made a mistake. Leonora had developed an anti-mystic eye physical skill and lately she basically avoided Anri’s gaze unconciously, but since Anri didn’t normally point at her own eyes, Leonora reflexively looked at them.

In the next moment, Leonora bent her knees with flowing movements, and putting her hands together, she glued her forehead to the ground. In a word, the dogeza.

“Ah-, sorry.”

5. Name the next nominee

“I went through a horrible time again…”

“I’m sorry, I said.”

Leonora’s dogeza had already become standard.

“Well, I’m sad to say that I’m used to it already, though. Well? Who’s going to do it next?”

“I’ll pass it to the Narou Contest participant Emoto Mashimesa 『A Scandinavian Noble and His Raptor Wife’s Life as Hunters in the Land of Snow』”
“Fumu, I see. Emoto-sensei who won a gold prize in the third Narou contest, and whose book was recently published, right? Well then, Emoto-sensei, I’ve heard that it is fine to ignore these, but if possible, please continue to pass the baton.”

“We’re counting on you.”

Evil God Average

【Book of God – Side Stories】

~incomplete~

Side Story 1 – A Certain Religion's Fall

"The founding of a nation that worships the Evil God, you say…?"

"Heavens…"

The meeting between the higher echelons of the Luxiria Theocracy grew stormy.
The cause was that the cultists that they had sent the Order of the Sacred Light to subjugate the other day had declared the establishment of a country.
However, given how obvious it was that the meeting would grow wild after this announcement, the situation could hardly be called surprising.

There was a square desk in the conference room, and sitting around the north, south, east and west sides were the top brass of the Theocracy.
On the north side, furthest from the entrance, sat the members from the Papal Board, who controlled the affairs of the Theocracy, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.
On the east side sat the members from the Magisterium, who governed the dogma of the Church of Sacred Light, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.
On the west side sat the members from the Eparchia, who governed the parishes including matters of foreign diplomacy, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.
Finally, on the south side sat members from the Presbyterium, who governed the training of priests and the like, a Cardinal and two Archbishops.
And on behind the Papal Board, in the most prestigious seat, furthest back, sat the incumbent Pope.
Together, these thirteen people composed the higher echelons of the Luxiria Theocracy, as well as the top brass of the Human Race's greatest religion, the Church of Sacred Light.

Each one had their own attendants standing behind them, and I too was one of them; somebody allowed to be here as the attendant to one of the

Archbishops from the Presbyterium. However, in my case, the one who originally should have been here had “by chance” fallen ill, so I was actually here as a replacement.

“ABSOLUTE NONSENSE! Who would acknowledge something like that!”

“To begin with, even the very existence of the Evil God is questionable!”

The ones who screamed were the members of the Magisterium.
From the eyes of they who governed the dogma of our Church, the “Establishment of the Evil God Nation” was understandably difficult to accept.
But what did they mean by the existence of the “Evil God” being questionable? …Or so I might have wondered in the past.
To begin with, the concept of the “Evil God” was something loudly insisted by those of the Magisterium, so doubting the existence of the Evil God was at odds with the claim they made themselves.
But if you knew the circumstances of what happened behind-the-scenes, the meaning of their words would be immediately understood.

imouto
──To think that the insistence of the Church regarding the existence of the “Evil God” was based on falsehoods.

imouto
An imaginary enemy woven into the dogma to agitate the fear of the believers, and thereby increase their dependence on the Church… Was their aim──although the ones who implemented this were their predecessors from generations ago──something along these lines?
Of course, to the high level members gathered here, that much was common sense, and as a result they couldn’t simply accept the fact that the “Evil God” truly existed.

“There was a report regarding the sighting of the true Evil God from the Forteran Army in their spearhead of the Order of Sacred Light, but…”

“Ridiculous. Likely an excuse created by the cowards who fled after mistaking something else for it. There is no worth in trusting impious people who tried to haggle their contribution to the Church.”

Among them, the youngest member, an Archbishop──though already in the prime of life──gave the report from Fortera, but the Cardinal of the Eparchia ignored it as nonsense.
Having said that, that Archbishop himself didn’t seem to actually believe it, and showed no sign of displeasure at having his remark repudiated.

“Well, at this point, whether the Evil God is an imposter, or the real thing is not of importance, for what we ought to do has not changed in the slightest.”

“Exactly as you say. Just the words ‘country of Evil God worshippers’ is that same as declaring hostility against us… no, against all of the Human Race.”

Hearing the statement from Cardinal of the Presbyterium, the Cardinal of the Papal Board agreed. And it seems that this was the same amongst all the members gathered here.
Of course, including the Pope sitting at the back.

“As servants who serve Sacred Goddess-sama, we cannot accept such a declaration. Obvious though it may be, there appear to be no objections.”

The aged Pope rose from his seat, and made his declaration as he overlooked the gathering of leaders.

“Then, Your Eminence…”

“Declare our rejection of the announcement under my name. Further, call for the agreement of the other nations.”

“As you wish.”

The Cardinal of the Papal Board accepted the edict from the Pope, and so ended the meeting.

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“What is Fortera thinking!?”

Hearing Fortera’s reaction to the Pope’s earlier proclamation, an urgent, special meeting was called.
To begin with, this kind of meeting was supposed to only be held at a certain time, once per year, and calling for a second meeting in such little time was extremely unusual.
However, considering the circumstances, it could be said that calling a meeting was natural.
Not only had the Kingdom of Fortera had rejected the Theocracy’s appeal and declared neutrality towards the Evil God Nation’s declaration, but brought attention to the dishonesty of the Church’s upper echelons——in other words, the people in this room, and furthermore showed their hostility by declaring the formation of a new sect.
It was not the case that nobody had ever opposed the headquarters of the Church, Luxiria, but an entire nation taking a position of hostility had never been seen before in history.
Of course, were this simply a rejection of the Church of Sacred Light, then they would have antagonised the other nations who had the Church as their state faith, and ostracised themselves.
However, they rejected not the Church of Sacred Light itself, but complained about the corruption of the current leaders, and formed a new sect based around devotions to the teachings——the Origin Faction.
Such an action was far more dangerous to the people in this room than simple opposition.

“The Origin Faction…? Rejecting our dogma? What nonsense.”

“It is likely mostly out of revenge for our earlier deployment of the Order.”

The Cardinal of the Magisterium openly frowned at the report. The report was the same as disgracing the Magisterium, so it was understandable.
The Cardinal of the Eparchia seemed unhappy as well, but that was due to another reason.

“And so, what was the impact on the other nations?”

“We tried to suppress the news, but it spread quite far. Too openly suppressing it would be liable to have the opposite effect, so we cannot help but act cautiously.”

“I suppose that cannot be helped either… EEI! So irritating!”

What the members of the Eparchia were agonising over was the information control of the announcement by the Kingdom of Fortera regarding the dishonesty of the higher-ups of the Church. From rampant bribery and abuse of power, to even the forgery of dogma – the many years of dishonesty were all made public at once, and the Eparchia were completely busy with suppressing the distrust from the believers.
Of course, had this all been unfounded rumours, doing so would not have been so difficult. However, given that it was tacitly understood amongst the other countries that this was at least half-true, controlling the information was not an easy task.
The Luxiria Theocracy with its small population and land held an advantage over the other nations due to having the absolute authority of being the home to the headquarters of the Church of Sacred Light. Putting things another way, with this advantage becoming unstable, they were liable to lose their superiority in an instant.

“For now, I suppose there is nothing we can do but urge the other nations not to join the faction created by Fortera.”

“Indeed. Let us have the churches in the other nations manoeuvre. Directly dealing with the Kingdom of Fortera will need to be postponed, but I do not think it can be helped. If the sect spreads, it will become unmanageable, after all.”

Authority gives rise to rights, and rights give rise to authorities. With the old roots they have formed in various countries, manoeuvring with their connections should prove to be quite effective.
Of course, Fortera understands this as well, and will likely move to suppress it. I suspect that a fierce power struggle will begin behind the scenes.
However, when it comes to the number of personnel they can mobilise, I cannot help but say that the Theocracy has the advantage.

As long as there is no major incident to overturn this situation, it will be difficult for the Kingdom of Fortera to gain the advantage.

It is because they understand this, that the people gathered here were unhappy, but relatively calm.

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“It-, It cannot be… Why would Sacred Goddess-sama…?”

One day, a little while after the previous meeting, the situation suddenly changed.
An unprecedented situation where Sacred Goddess Sophia made a revelation to all of the Human Race, and in merely one night, the situation in all the nations took a complete change.
The contents of the revelation included the existence of the Dark God, previously unknown to the Human Race; the “Evil God”, who was different to the one known by the Human Race; and the fact that the Human Race needed to conquer a dungeon in order for her to win the 3-way power struggle between the gods.
Had the revelation been received only by a small minority then it may have been tidied away as lies, but now that the entire Human Race had received the revelation, nobody in this room had the power to make them believe it was false.

And at the same time, this also spelt a major dilemma for the Luxiria Theocracy.
By the hand of none other than the one they worshipped, the Sacred Goddess, although it was only a part, their dogma was denied. What’s more, the part that was denied coincided with Fortera’s claims.
If one part of Fortera’s claims were confirmed, then it would naturally make people suspect that the rest of the claims were true as well. The rest of the claims… in other words, the claims regarding the corruption of the upper echelons of the Church of Sacred Light. It’s very likely that all of the Sacred Goddess’s followers believe that Fortera’s claims were correct.

“This is bad. At this rate…”

“We must urgently come up with some countermeasure.”

“But even if you say that, what are we to do. In this situation, taking a firm measure against Fortera would likely backfire on us. Manouevring against the problem country has been forbidden as well.”

“That…”

Hearing the Cardinal of the Papal Board say that, the others in the room fell silent as well. Just as he said, making some declaration about mobilising the Order of Sacred Light would instead heighten suspicion towards them.
Even the option of diverting dissatisfaction towards the “Evil God Nation” had been prohibited by none other than the Sacred Goddess herself.

“It cannot be helped. It seems that we have no choice but to admit to our mistakes in the dogma in regards to the Forteran claims about the Evil God.”

While the room was wrapped in silence, a voice called out from behind the members of the Papal Board.

“But, Your Eminence…”

“Now that Sacred Goddess-sama has affirmed Fortera’s claims, we cannot firmly object. Of course, we will deny the other claims, and must endeavour to abate the damage even a little.”

It was this moment that the Church of Sacred Light, that had thus far ruled humanity from the background, was forced to compromise, as well as the moment that they acknowledged a small, but substantial defeat.
I am sure that the Kingdom of Fortera will not let this chance go, and will use this critical moment to persecute them.

The winter had come for the Luxiria Theocracy, that had held its influence for a long, long time.

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“And that concludes the report.”

“Well done. Hu hu hu, the Sacred Goddess’ relevation has given us an advantage. While they are embroiled in their factional disputes, let us plan the strengthening of our nation, for it is the will of Anri-sama.”

“By your will.”

“Now then, the coming days shall be busy. We must not let up on our missionary work either. And the construction of *that* must go ahead.”

Side Story 2 – A Certain Scripture's Pandemic

I decided to try writing a third-person story this time.

"So this is the problem book."

In a room in a certain country, a number of people gazed down upon a book with black bindings that lay atop a desk.

"Yes, Your Majesty. You must take care never to touch it with your hands."

"I know."

The one referred to as Your Majesty was the king of that nation, and the people gathered in the room were also important leaders within the country.
Just the fact that so many people were gathered in this room was in and of itself a sign of the extraordinary circumstances behind it.

"The Black Scripture, huh. It seems that they've spread quite the troublesome thing."

Their gazes were focused on the book called the Black Scripture.
Although, the term 'Black Scripture' did not refer to only the book in front of them.

"Just the ones we have been able to identify alone indicate that over a hundred of them have been brought into the country. If we include those unaccounted for, it is likely that they number a few hundred…"

The one who gave the report was the skilled man who was supervisor to the Court Mages of this nation, as well as the Chief of Magical Research.
As he spoke, he turned the cover of the Black Scripture.

“O-, Oi!? Are you fine with touching that!?”

The leaders in the room panicked at the Chief’s actions, but the Chief replied in a resigned voice,

“I have already touched it once, so…”

Now that he had mentioned it, they noticed that for a while now, the Chief had been limping as if to protect his right foot. And now that they had realised this, they all looked at him in pity.

“Please look at this.”

Behind the flipped cover were the warnings of the book.
According to the warnings, the book was a cursed item, and misfortune would befall those who had received this book. If they desired to avoid the misfortune, it was required that they transcribe the contents of the book, and hand it to another person, and unless they did so the misfortune would continue eternally. Furthermore, the curse would manifest in the transcribed copy as well.

The Black Scripture… A book written by the Evil God that was truly most wicked and foul. At that very moment it was making its terror known in countries where it had been propagated further.

imouto
“In order to avoid the misfortune, one must transcribe the book, huh. Then it is natural that it has spread this far.”

“Yes.”

Naturally, in order to avoid the misfortune, those who had accepted the book would transcribe a copy and try to push it onto others. To not do so was the same as being tormented by the misfortune for eternity, and was not something anybody would accept. Even if they prohibited this, it would merely lead to a revolt.

“Is it impossible to dispel the curse?”

“It was impossible even for the Archbishops of the Church of Sacred Light. The curse that it contains is far too powerful.”

Having said that though, in contrast to the fiendishness of its propagation mechanism, the misfortunes were light enough to be called an anti-climax, and this gap had caused the researchers much puzzlement. The misfortune that a receiver suffered was randomised, and although the misfortunes differed, none of them were beyond the level of simple harassment. Even the limp on the chief was due to the curse of continually stubbing the little toe of his foot against shelves, and was not a particularly grave injury. However, it was also difficult to say that this was something that a person could ignore.
Even the Chief had originally not planned to spread the harm to anyone else, but after stubbing his toe three times, he yielded, and pushed a copy onto the Vice-Chief. Because of that, at present, the Vice-Chief’s loyalty towards the Chief had dropped considerably.

“Can it not be stopped?”

“That would likely be difficult. However, there is a way to guide the damage in a more preferable direction.”

“It cannot be helped. At this rate, there is no option but to reduce the harm within our own country.”

It was difficult to stop the book from being pushed onto somebody else. However, it was not impossible to determine who the book was pushed onto. If they guided the harm outside the nation, the country would be saved for now, even without solving the root problem.

“It is likely that this will worsen relations with the neighbouring countries, but…”

“Of course, we will not disclose such a thing publicly. Hand them over to merchants leaving the country and the like, and have them independently carry them outside our borders.”

“I see. Then it will also be necessary to prevent them being taken into our borders from other nations.”

“Indeed. Prepare the arrangements urgently.”

“Yes, Your Majesty. Understood.”

With the King’s order, the leaders all began to act.
With this, the damage to the nation could probably be abated.
Of course, the countries that had the books forced upon them would in turn force them on another, and so each nation would suffer the harm one by one. The result was that the nation unfortunate enough to suffer it last would have nowhere to force it onto, and would be forced to push it around within its own borders.

“Considering the state of the other countries, it’s clear who the final nation will be, huh.”

“Your Majesty? Did you say something?”

“Haha, I was simply thinking that it may be time to reconsider our association with the Theocracy.”

Considering the flow from the country that produced this, the closer one was the earlier one would suffer, and the further away one was, the later it would come. In that case, it was not difficult to imagine that the nation with the greatest antagonism with the country of origin would be the eventual target of this curse.
As for which nation in particular, that much was already common knowledge.

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While around the world, the Black Scripture was being treated as an object of fear, there was one country alone that instead saw it with affection.
The Holy Anri Thearchy; a newly established nation formed by a gathering of those who worshipped Evil God Anri. At present it was only a small

nation that would be better called a town, but with each passing day, its influence grew.

To the Thearchy, the Black Scripture said to be written by Evil God Anri was truly a “scripture”. Every person in the country had a copy, and it was a virtue to proactively transcribe them and proselytise in other countries. Of course, because the normal citizens of the Thearchy had no export route, the copies would be gathered together in the Thearchy, and sent beyond the borders all at once.
Additionally, although the people of the Thearchy also suffered the curse at first, it was thought of as a trial from God.

And in this Thearchy, two buildings linked to the Temple had been newly established.

The first was the Orphanage; an institution for sheltering children who had lost their parents. Other nations had their own measures for orphans as well, but they were undeniably lacking, and so children with no place to go appeared no matter the nation. Gathering such children within the Orphanage, providing them enough food and a warm bed, and finally thoroughly educating them was the role of this institution.
Together with things like writing and arithmetic, the children gathered in the Orphanage were also taught from a young age the splendour of the deity worshipped by the Thearchy, Evil God Anri (although she was not recognised as “Evil” God within the Thearchy).
With strong piety towards Evil God Anri, as well as a vigorous education, they were also possible future elites for the Thearchy.

The other institution was a building created for the sake of transcribing the Black Scripture. The desks, chairs, paper, and pens required for transcription were lined up neatly inside the building, and at the back were people on standby who turned the pages into books.
This building was also the gathering place for transcribed scriptures, and gathered not only copies from within the institute, but copies from all across the country.
The books stored in the Transcription Hall were gathered and counted, and each month the number of copies was announced on a board.
The one who splendidly managed first place would be publicly commended

by the Pope himself, but up until now that had never happened even once. The reason was simple – first place was being monopolised by a certain man.

“Hmm, I’m in good shape today, aren’t I.”

Unwilling to hand over the position of first place was none other than the Pope himself. As long as the position of first was being taken by him, nobody else would be commended. Even at this very moment he was sitting in first place, and transcribing copies in the Transcription Hall, but shockingly, this man was transcribing a different copy with each hand. Normally the transcription process would be carried out while silently reading the original on the side, but when it came to this man, he had already memorised every word of the Black Scripture, and wrote from memory. In order to fulfil the act of ‘transcribing’, he did in fact have a copy there, but he was not looking inside.
Even ignoring the fact that he had learnt the contents by heart, he was writing with both hands at the same time. Such a feat could be called nothing but skilled, but as a result, he boasted a transcription speed of over twice the average person’s.
As long as there was nobody else who could replicate this feat, the seat of first place would stay with him alone.
Although there was the concern of who was governing the nation if he was doing nothing but transcribing, but it was because he was properly fulfilling those duties as well that made this so difficult to comment on.

“Pope-samaa, I finishedd one～”

“Me tooo～”

“Me tooo～”

“My, how splendid. Anri-sama is surely delighted.”

Boys and girls were sitting by the Pope and transcribing as well, proudly announcing their achievements to him.
With this heartwarming scene before him, the Pope gave a gentle smile and praised the children.

“Yayyy~”

“I’ll go write one moree~”

“I might get first place!”

“Huhu, try your best.”

In addition, separate to the adult rankings was a children’s ranking that was properly functioning. Centred around the children of the Orphanage, they transcribed as a part of their upbringing. It was a ground-breaking arrangement that had them learn the teachings of the scriptures, while practising their reading and writing as well.
The contents of the scriptures were morals regarding how to live properly as a person, so it was nothing unsuitable for a child’s upbringing.
The amount of sweets given out were dependent on the rankings, so all the children assertively competed in transcribing of their own accord.

“Huhuhu, building the Transcription Hall was truly the right answer. With this, the proselytising will surely advance even further.”

In addition, had all the nations worked together and used death row prisoners as sacrifices, they might have been able to solve the issue surprisingly simply.

Side Story 3 – A Certain Owner and Pet's Walk

In the middle of my third-person challenge.

Monster——a term used to refer to living beings that possess above a certain amount of mana.
However, strictly speaking, this definition was not accurate. The first reason was that humans and demons possessed mana but were not included as monsters. The second is that golems, undead, and other non-living creatures were generally included as monsters as well.
All feared beings that cause harm to humans and demons were being labelled as "monsters" – this was probably the best way to describe the situation.

However, even if they were feared beings that cause harm, although a few monsters did pose a threat by appearing near towns or villages, average people were generally unrelated to the majority of them.
Golems and undead only appeared in specific locations like dungeons or ruins, and the other particularly powerful monsters tended to live in locations far from civilisation, rarely leaving. Of course, it wasn't the case that these monsters were avoiding settlements, but rather that settlements were built in places far from the territories of these monsters.

With the exception of some adventurers, the beings that come to mind upon hearing the term "monster" were goblins, kobolds, or an orc at best, and from the point of view of normal people who lived their whole lives in town, even these monsters were rarely seen, and only heard of.
To such people, particularly powerful monsters were creatures that existed solely in folktales, legends, and fairy tales.
Of course, these people understood as well that such creatures did exist in the world.
However, these creatures would almost never appear in the personal "worlds" that they each lived in, and were as good as non-existent.

imouto
Because of this…

imouto
“I-, I-, IT-, IT’S A DRAGONNNNNNNN!?”

“RUN! RUUUUUUUUUUN!!”

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!”

imouto
if a dragon were to appear in the skies above them, it was natural that panic would ensue.

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It all began earlier that morning.

After breakfast time, Light God Sophia witnessed a strange spectacle during her continued stay at the Evil God Temple.
It was the figure of the Evil God Anri making food. Well, that much was fine. Tena had left with the human Anri, so seeing the Evil God preparing food was not so strange in itself. To begin with, it wasn’t that she couldn’t cook due to a lack of technical skills, but rather that she couldn’t hold a kitchen knife due to the curse. Now that she had overcome the curse, there was nothing to stop her from cooking.
Being “able to cook” and “able to cook well” are entirely different matters, but for the sake of her honour, let us speak no further on the matter.

Having established this, what was strange was not the cooking in itself, but the food that Anri was cooking──apparently sandwiches──and the fact that she then put them into a basket.
To begin with, they had already eaten breakfast, so what she was cooking was for lunch. Cooking food for lunch despite only having finished breakfast, and then placing the food into a basket.
The only thing imaginable was…

“Umm… Anri? Preparing your food like that, are you intending on going someplace?”

So asked Sophia, whilst believing it was impossible.
It couldn’t be helped that she found it unbelievable. After all, as far as Sophia knew, the black-haired, expressionless newcomer god in front of her was somebody who never went outside even once a year. A complete hikikomori.
With such a person doing something that could only be seen as preparation for going outside, the abnormality of the situation needn’t even be said.

“Mn, I’m going to go out a bit. I’ll be back before evening. I’ve made you sandwiches for lunch, so eat them later.”

Hearing that, she followed Anri’s gaze and found other sandwiches sitting on a plate. They numbered about two people’s worth. Probably made for both Sophia and Anbaal.
It was the case with Anri as well, but both Sophia and Anbaal were divines and thus relied on faith instead of food for sustenance.
To the two of them, eating food was nothing more than enjoyment, but needless to mention Anri who had naturally grown used to a human’s habits, even Sophia and Anbaal almost always ate three meals a day while they were staying in the Temple.

“Well thank you for that, but just where are you going?”

“I haven’t decided yet. Just going for a walk, after all.”

“I see.”

Anri replied that she was just going out without any goal in mind, but since it was healthier to go on a walk than to continue holing up in the temple, Sophia showed her agreement too.
As an Evil God that threw all creatures in the land into an abyss of fear, there was probably no greater nuisance than wandering about on a whim, but Sophia believed that Anri was used to her eyes and aura by now, and would probably make do somehow.

That this was an incredibly naive thought was something that she only realised after hearing Anri's next line. And by then, it was too late.

imouto
imouto
"Well, I'm off now. Time for Vnee's walk."

imouto
imouto
"…Hah? W-, Wait, stop right there!?"

Sophia froze due to the unexpected words, and faster than she could recover and call out to stop, Anri had touched the sandwich basket as well as another basket many times larger, before teleporting away.

imouto
"By 'walk'… she meant Black Dragon Vardneel… instead?"

Sophia's mutter resounded through the empty room.

imouto
"…She plans on letting that Black Dragon out?"

Still in a daze, Sophia continued to mutter, but nobody was there to reply.

And like that, due to the Human Race's supposed guardian deity missing the chance to stop the tragedy, the world's most powerful and wicked pet was released into the open.

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A massive body of over 20 metres danced through the air as though splitting the clear blue sky in two.
The beats of its wings were powerful, and the explosive propulsive force gave rise to incredible speeds.
Although it was still fine due to the fact that he was high up in the end, had he been flying close to the surface, the wind pressure alone would probably have blown everything away.

Black Dragon Vardneel.
The most wicked dragon, said to bring calamity to the world, was enjoying the skies for the first time in a while.
Even since he had been summoned as a boss for the dungeon, he hadn't been allowed outside even once, and basically spent his time imprisoned in the small, cramped room. That probably made his sense of liberation even greater.

"GUOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOHHHH!!!"

The roar that he let out in his joy sounded like a joyful song of freedom.
However, as for whether or not he was truly free, of course the answer was that he wasn't.
The master that he feared the most in the world was present on his back, so it was actually a far cry from freedom.

When he had first been summoned he had cowered at her aura, and because of the terror he lay belly up in submission, but after, he grew closer day by day due to the training, and by now he had stopped running up the wall when he saw her.
Even so, if you had to ask if his fear had completely disappeared, then the answer would be no.
The instinctual terror that he felt due to his master's aura was not so simply removed.
Although he was not particularly intelligent, he knew by instinct just how dangerous it would be to anger the master on his back.
Because of that, although he was rejoicing his freedom, he was careful to fly so that the feeling of riding his back was comfortable.

imouto
But despite his consideration due to fear, to put it simply, it was completely useless.

"S-, So cold…"

The black-robed girl on his back shivered while desperately clinging to his back.
No matter how careful he was being to avoid accidentally shaking her, given

the altitude and speed, the feeling of riding his back was already as bad as it could get.
And naturally so, because while the high altitude alone meant that the temperature was quite low, on top of that, she was being exposed to the intense wind pressure from his flying speed.
As divines had high stamina she was able to bear it, but had she been a human it wouldn't have been strange for her to have frozen to death.
In addition, unlike a horse's back, the wide back of the dragon made it impossible to straddle, so she could do nothing but cling to the scales and the moment her hand slipped, she would be falling headfirst to the ground.

"I-, I should have just called this off…"

Even if she regretted the walk now, it was much too late.
She had envisioned a pleasant trip through the sky, but the reality was harsh. The path to become a dragon rider was severe.
Also, although she had enough power to easily solve the cold and wind issues, sadly, Anri was still inexperienced as a divine, and the idea of using an Authority in this situation hadn't quite occurred to her.

"Let's hurry up and find a plain somewhere to land on."

The plan was to find a wide plain somewhere and treat herself to lunch.
She had prepared her own portion of sandwiches, and she had the Black Dragon's lunch in the larger basket as well… Although she actually held neither of them, and stored them in her item box though.
However, at present she hadn't even the slightest care about lunch, and just wanting to land somewhere was all she could think of.
As a result, no matter what kind of uproar was happening below her, she hadn't the composure to notice.
And right this very moment, the fact that the people of a town were in a huge panic due to a dragon sighting, was something she had no way of knowing.

"Ah…"

With the wind blowing in her eyes it was hard to see, but the moment that she saw a wide plain in her limit vision, Anri thanked God for the help.

Despite the fact that she was a divine herself.
Tapping on the back of the Black Dragon she was clinging to, she gave him instructions on where to land.

“Over there. Land over there.”

“Guru?”

The Black Dragon with low intelligence naturally couldn’t understand her words, but even so, he seemed to understand Anri’s intention, and after turning towards the grass plains, he lowered his altitude and speed to begin landing.
Now that they were heading towards the ground and the wind and cold were receding, Anri let out a relieved sigh.

imouto
imouto
That she would have to suffer the same ordeal to get home was something she only realised after finishing up her sandwiches.

imouto
imouto
And taking the chance to mention it, the fact that more suffering was waiting for her in the form of Sophia’s lecturing, was something she hadn’t expected at the time.

Side Story 4 – A Certain Group of Heroes' Manual Labour

On the second floor of the Evil God Temple, a group of six men and women were gathered before a certain room.
The group comprised three men, and three women, and was in a sense the group that was least fitting to be here.

"Umm, is this the place?"

"Yes. In accordance to Sacred Goddess-sama's esteemed words, I believe there is no mistake."

"But still, this place, ey? Why'd Sacred Goddess-sama tell us to come to a place like the Evil God Temple, anyways?"

"Beats me. Having said that though, if it's to get Arc's Holy Sword back, of course we had to go."

"I need my Holy Spear back too, after all."

"I as well. Without my Holy Bow in hand, I really can't be said to be fit for the title Hero."

They were Hero of the Holy Sword, Arc's party; Hero of the Holy Spear, Lionel; and Hero of the Holy Bow, Orlaine; a total of six members. However, ever since they failed to capture the "Holy Land of the Evil God" and had their weapons stolen from them, their titles now felt a little ironic.
Holy Weapons that served as both the symbols of the Heroes and the source of their powers——weapons blessed by Light God Sophia that chose their owners. Instead of wielders choosing their weapons, it was the weapons themselves that chose and acknowledged the wielders as their owners.
And those acknowledged by these weapons became existences chosen by Light God Sophia, and gained the title of Hero. Arc, Lionel and Orlaine as well had become Heroes in this way.
Because of that, they were Heroes only because of their Holy Weapons, and therefore it was *because* they were heroes that they ought to be holding

their Holy Weapons. Just as Orlaine had said, having their weapons stolen was a fatal defeat for a Hero, and even if they were verbally abused, there was nothing they could say in return.
“It won’t return even when I call for it… Just what on earth has happened to my Holy Bow?”

“Yeah, usually when we call for them they immediately come back, ey?”

In reply to Orlaine’s anxious words, the blue haired Lionel agreed.
The Holy Weapons were the ones who chose the owners, and on top of absolutely nobody else being capable of using them, even if they weren’t in hand, they would immediately fly towards the owner once called for.
Knowing this, when the Heroes had failed the dungeon and woken up without them, they had tried calling for the weapons countless times.
However, the Holy Weapons would not return.
When it came to Orlaine, until Arc and the others had stopped her, she called for the Holy Bow again and again until her light purple hair was a mess and her eyes were filled with tears, but there wasn’t any effect.

“I’m sure it’ll be fine. Sacred Goddess-sama told me that I would be able to recover my Holy Sword if I came here. In that case, the Holy Sword should be safe.”

“It would be good if that was true…”

The blonde haired Arc tried to cheer her up, but Orlaine hung her head, perhaps still worried. To begin with, as a frail girl chosen by the Holy Bow to be a Hero, she had strained herself to fulfil her duties. She was probably emotionally unstable due to the shock of losing the crucial Holy Bow.

“It’s fine. I haven’t broken the Holy Sword, the Holy Spear, or the Holy Bow either.”

While the Heroes were talking, a voice called out from behind them.
Thinking that they hadn’t noticed somebody enter the room because they were too focused on themselves, the party turned around in surprise.
And standing there was a black-haired girl clad in a jet black dress decorated with rose designs.

The moment they saw the girl’s black eyes, a shudder ran through them all.
The blood dramatically left them, and they had goosebumps all over their

bodies. Their throats felt parched, and their teeth chattered. Around the time their limbs began to tremble of their own accord, their whole bodies started letting out a cold sweat, as though finally remembering to do so.

It was impossible to beat this girl… Even if they had their Holy Weapons, it was impossible to beat this girl.

Up until that moment, the strongest foe they had ever met was the one currently on standby deep below on the 30th floor, but from this girl standing in front of them they could feel a power even greater than the despair-inducing Imperial Death.

Their instincts, emotions and intellect… the fear experienced by all of these seemed to crush for an instant the pure and strong hearts of these Heroes. But this was certainly not because they were weak of spirit. Had they been so, they would have immediately escaped the moment they met her eyes. The very fact that they still remained there was a testament to their strength.
And how they responded was by dropping on the spot, getting on their hands and knees, and pressing their head against the floor. It was the pose of ultimate apology, passed down in the legends of the Heroes──the dogeza.

"…Ah-, sorry."

Because the people around her had gotten used to averting their own eyes, the girl had half-forgotten about her own mystic eyes and she reflexively muttered an apology in front of the resulting dogeza festival.

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The girl——Anri, told them to get up while avoiding her eyes, as well as the gist of her mystic eyes. It was only a while after her first appearance that they were able to have a conversation.
There was a small upset when Anri named herself as a relative of the Evil God, but after showing her adventurer card and having them confirm that she was a human, they didn't ask anything more.
Normally a relative of the Evil God wasn't something that the Heroes could overlook, but because she was somebody they met at the place that the Light God had told them to visit, the fact that they couldn't do anything careless was one of the reasons they didn't inquire further.

The second reason was that there was something even more important to them in her earlier words.

“Then, you have the Holy Sword right now!?”

“The Holy Spear too?”

“And the Holy Bow!?”

Hearing Anri mention the locations of the Holy Weapons, the Heroes reflexively let out cries of surprise.

“Please, return them to us!”

Arc held Anri’s hand in his two, and desperately appealed to her. Normally in a situation like this the two would be looking at each other in the eyes, but because they were making sure not to do so, it looked terrible comical from the side.
The one who had been most shaken due to the loss of their Holy Weapon was Orlaine, but inside, it was Arc that was most anxious. And a big part of that was because unlike Orlaine and Lionel who did their work solo, Arc worked in a party. In the end, it was nothing more than a personal problem for Orlaine and Lionel, but to Arc it was causing inconvenience to his party members, so it couldn’t be helped.

“I’m fine with giving them back, but there will be conditions.”

“Oi, oi, whaddya mean conditions?”

Zio showed his dissatisfaction towards Anri’s words.
From his point of view, the mission of the Heroes was to protect the Human Race, so just the thought of being uncooperative was unthinkable, but that had nothing to do with Anri.

“…Please tell me them. If there’s anything I can do, I will!”

“…I will too!”

“Can’t be helped. Pisses me off, but just say it.”

The Heroes resolved themselves with tragic expressions, and Anri simply informed them of the condition.

imouto
“Help me build my house.”

“Hah?”

imouto
The six of them were wondering if they had heard wrong, but Anri’s reply didn’t change.
After asking for the third time, the Heroes finally understood that she was serious, and Anri gave them a simple explanation of the situation.
In order for Anri to move out of the temple that she was living in, she needed her house to be built, so in return for the Holy Weapons that she received from the Evil God, she wanted them to help her with the construction.

“So uh, basically construction work? Soz, but I’ve never done that before. Don’t think I’ll be much help, yanno?”

“I have professionals hired as well. Just helping with the heavy lifting and other simple work is enough.”

Lionel voiced his doubts, but Anri expected such a question, and replied with a nod.

“Heroes as labourers, huh…”

“The image is a little…”

“No, that doesn’t matter! It’s not like we’re doing anything bad, so if that’s all we have to do it’s still cheap.”

Frey and Widdi showed their disapproval, but Arc replied as though shaking off the thought. He had been deeply anxious about what kind of job the Evil God’s relative would demand from him, so the construction work was quite the anticlimax.
To a person like him who wanted to help those who needed it, he felt like it was something he would be fine with helping with even without the deal with the Holy Sword.

“Well, can’t be helped, ey? If it’s just manual labour, I think I can do it too, after all.”

“Eh? Wait, Zio. It’s to get back my Holy Sword, so it’s enough that only I work, right?”

“What are you being so distant for. Either way, we aren’t gunna be working until you get the Holy Sword back, so it’d be better to get it back quickly, right?”

“Well, it’s like Zio says. Widdi and I wouldn’t be too useful for manual labour, but there should be other stuff we can help out with. Right, Widdi?”

“Of course. We’ll help out as well! We won’t let you work alone, Arc-sama.”

“Everyone…”

Seeing Arc’s party reaffirm their bonds, Orlaine and Lionel looked a little envious as they looked on.
Also, because of the sudden addition to her workers, Anri was mentally pumping her fist in victory.

“Well, that’s how it is. I’m fine with it.”

“I am as well. Even if I look like this, I do work out, so I can do physical work as well!”

Both Lional and Orlaine agreed, and the six of them agreed to help Anri build her house.

“Thanks. The personnel involved in building the house are gathered in that room over there, so just follow their instructions. The planning stage should be just about finished.”

“Yeah, got it.”

At this point, they all realised why they had been sent here.
After watching Anri leave, the six of them fired themselves up, and opened the door before them.

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imouto
And then closed it.

imouto
imouto
“Oi, what the hell was that battlefield!?”

Zio let out anxious words after catching a glimpse of what was beyond the door.
Indeed; it was a battlefield.
A number of people were gathered around a model mansion in the middle of the room, and vehemently arguing, while a mountain of discarded blueprints lay to the side.
When they saw the workers frantically run about as angry roars flew about the room, for some reason the six of them saw themselves overlapped with it, and chills ran down their spines.

And that image became a reality.
The door that they had closed on reflex was opened with a bang, and from inside the room came a blonde young man in a luxurious priests’ gown.

“You must be the workers that Anri-sama spoke of! Huhuhu, we have been waiting for you!”

The blonde man had handsome looks, but the dark bags under his eyes put it to waste. Probably on a high from pulling multiple all-nighters fuelled on enthusiasm alone, the man continued to talk happily as the dumbfounded six looked on.

“We were just starting to run short of workers! Quickly, quickly! Please come inside!”

With those words, the young man──Pope Harvin, took their rears at a speed invisible even to the veteran Heroes, and began pushing the six of them into the room.

“Hey-, hang on!?”

“S-, Stop it!”

“Hii!?”

“T-, This isn’t a joke, you know!?”

“N-, No way, oi…”

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!?”

Having finally understood that it was no simple construction work, the six of them tried to escape in a panic, but the Pope paid no heed to the pitiful sacrifices, and forcefully pushed them in the room before closing the door.

imouto
Also, while Anri had no idea, the plans had at some point upgraded from “house” to “palace” and although the time the six of them needed to work had risen in proportion, it was already too late.

Side Story 5 – A Certain Servant's Return Home

"You want to go back to your old village?"

It was a little while after they had settled down in the Black Rose Mansion that Tena had told Anri as such.

"Yes. I had always been hesitant about it, but in the end I really do want to meet with my family once."

When she had first begun living with Anri, they had discussed this matter as well, but at the time she hadn't been able to settle her feelings yet, and they postponed the visit. It was natural that she held complex feelings about being sold as a slave, but with time, she was able to sort them out.
And being the case, Anri had only one possible reply.

"Got it. I'll be fine here, so don't worry and go."

There were plenty of things that she'd be troubled with if Tena wasn't here to do the housework, but if it was just for a short while, then she would manage somehow, which is why Anri easily gave her consent. After all, it wasn't as though Anri herself couldn't do housework, and Leonora was here too. Even the young Lili had recently begun to help out around the house, so Anri judged there was no problem.
And so, Anri tried to send Tena off, but Tena herself gave an unexpected reply.

"Umm… If possible, I would like to introduce you to my family, Anri-sama, but is that no good?"

"……Eh?"

Had anyone else been in the room, they would very probably have tried to stop this, but for better or for worse, it was only the two of them in the room.

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It was a small village, a few days' carriage from Riemel Town. Almost nobody visited the village, save the occasional merchants, or a pastor from the Church of Sacred Light, and in this village arrived a single luxurious horse-carriage.

Before the eyes of the villagers staring in curiosity, opened the door of the carriage, and from there alighted two girls.
The moment the villagers saw the face of one of the girls, they immediately formed a ring around her at a distance.
The reason was simple; an angular black mask covered her eyes. Together with her entirely black dress with its bewitching design, there was nothing that could be more suspicious, and it couldn't be helped that the villagers were wary.
Because of how much impact the girl had, the gazes of the villagers completely ignored the girl who they normally would have been concentrating on.

"Umm…"

"? …Tena? Aren't you Tena!?"

Tena timidly raised her voice, and finally noticing her, the villagers let out cries of surprise.
It was a small village to begin with, and everybody knew each other. All of them remembered the girl who had been sold as a slave. Once one of them noticed her, villagers tried to draw near her, one after another.
But overwhelmed by the strange girl standing next to her, they couldn't come near and instead stood around a little distance away.

"So you were fine, Tena…"

"Yes, Roi-san."

A man in the prime of his life called out to Tena, and with that as the impetus, all the other villagers began calling out to her as well.

"Thank goodness. Everybody was so worried for you."

"Muer-obaasan…"

An old lady with a cane spoke to Tena in tears, and Tena's eyes became watery as well.

"Tena-oneechan!"

"I'm sorry, Epina."

A girl around Lili's age ran up to Tena, hugging her, and Tena stroked her head with a gentle smile.

"……"

"……"

And then, silence fell.
All of the villagers were in joy at their reunion with Tena, but because the girl next to her was on their minds, they couldn't concentrate.
All of them wanted to push the task onto somebody else, and nobody could say the words, but finally the man from before──Roi, timidly asked,

"By the way, who is that person?"

Once again, all the gazes fell onto the girl, but she simply stood there calmly, showing no signs of being overwhelmed.

"Ah, this personage is my master, Anri-sama."

A commotion ran through the villagers.
After looking back and forth between the faces of the masked Anri, and Tena, complicated expressions appeared on their faces.

The villagers knew that Tena had been sold as a slave.
Being a beauty, even despite her age, had her master been a man, his intention would have been clear, and the villagers would likely have turned their hostility on him.
On this point, the master in question was a young-looking woman, and Tena seemed to be fond of her as well. Tena was somebody close to them, and she couldn't have been sold to a better person. Normally, the villagers should have welcomed this.
However…

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imouto
──What on earth was that mask!?

So wondered every single villager there.

Whether her age, or her sex, she seemed to be the safest and most fortunate master possible for Tena, but just that suspicious mask on her face weighed on their minds.
They wanted to ask why she was wearing such a mask. They wanted to ask, but once they considered that it might be disrespectful, in the end they couldn't bring it up.
To begin with, looking at the carriage she arrived in, and the dress that she was wearing, there was no mistaking that she was a powerful person with a considerable sum of assets. If they incurred her displeasure, it was possible that a small village like this would be very simply crushed… Having considered that, the villagers couldn't give voice to their question.

The truth was that the girl──Anri, was simply an adventurer in Fortera, to which this village belonged to, and leaving aside her substantial connections to the Holy Anri Thearchy, she actually had no official authority at all. However, the villagers had no way of knowing this.

In the end, the villagers didn't bring up Anri's mask, and the two of them headed towards Tena's house.

After parting from the villagers, Tena and Anri came to a stop in front of a house. Even now the villagers were worrying about them at a distance, but the two girls hadn't noticed.
The house was a cosy one built from wood, and it seemed as though quite some time had passed since its construction, because it was damaged here and there.

"This place?"

"Yes, this is my… this is the house that my family lives in."

Tena couldn't bring herself to say 『my house』. Her brows were curved in a difficult expression.
She stood there in front of the door, and stared at the doorknob.

“Not going to go in?”

“…I’ll, be opening it now.”

Anri gently prompted her, and as though finding her courage, Tena tightly clenched her hand before reaching out to open the door.
However, before she could do so, a voice called out to her from the side.

“……Tena?”

Standing there was a blonde woman in the latter half of her thirties, clad in simple clothes. Her expression seemed to say that she simply couldn’t believe it, and she stared at Tena.

“Mum!”

Tena had hesitated at opening the door, but it seemed that her desire to meet with her family was stronger after all. Tena ran in tears to the woman, and tightly embraced her.
Tena’s mother was dumbfounded for a while, but eventually realising that this was real, she wept and hugged Tena back.

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Noticing voices in front of the door, the rest of the family went out to investigate as well, and after hugging each other in tears at the miraculous reunion, they invited Anri and Tena into the house.
Sitting at the table, Tena recounted her experiences thus far. About being sold to the slave merchants, and almost losing her life to a fatal disease, and upon hearing her treatment until she was sold to Anri as a slave, Tena’s family burst into tears.

“Tena… Tena, I’m sorry! I’m so sorry!”

Tena’s father lowered his head to the table and apologised, but Tena calmly shook her head.

“It’s fine, Dad. I know that if I wasn’t sold that day, I would have just starved to death anyway. And thanks to that, I was able to meet with Anri-sama and the others, so… it’s fine already.”

When Tena said so, her father tightly held her hands from across the table, and holding his head against them, he cried.

imouto
After crying for a while, this time her father lowered his head to Anri.

“You saved Tena, didn’t you. Thank you very much! Thank you very much!”

“Thank you very much!”

“Thank you very much!”

“Thank you, Oneechan!”

Her father, her mother, her older brother and then younger brother all began thanking Anri in a bow.

Anri had been spaced out, and sipping tea while watching the family’s reunion without much involvement, but now that they all began focusing on her she fell into confusion and panic.
Raising her hands towards them, she spoke.

“It wasn’t really… anything special.”

Anri said that and tried to downplay herself, but the family’s looks of gratitude were unchanging.
While the back and forth between thanks and modesty continued for a while, eventually somebody asked a certain question.

“Hey, hey, why are you wearing a mask?”

“H-, Hey now!”

Because Tena’s little brother was still young, he innocently voiced the question that the villagers couldn’t.
His mother tried to stop him in a panic, but it was too late.

“Why, you ask? Well…”

There were two reasons that Anri was wearing a mask; the first was to prevent the effect of her mystic eyes from invoking, while the second was

out of fear of the consequences of having the same face as a god.
However, if she was to explain these things, then it would require her to touch upon her skills, as well as her relationship with the Evil God.
Just a while ago when Tena recounted her experiences to her family, she introduced Anri as a daughter of a mage family who was presently conducting research in Riemel.
By now it was too difficult to explain the truth.

“Well…”

“Well?”

Anri cut her words short as though in teasing. In reality she was simply troubled on how to answer, but from an outsider’s point of view, it plainly looked like she was building up the suspense.
Everybody in the room waited on Anri’s words.
Even the mother that had tried to stop her son’s rudeness a while ago seemed to be curious as well, because like the rest of her family, she was watching Anri’s every action.

“Well…”

“Well?”

Because Anri was being so suggestive with her words, even Tena who supposedly knew the truth found herself leaning forward in anticipation.
With no way to take back her words, Anri declared the only reason she could come up with.

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imouto
imouto
“Because it’s, cool?”

Hearing that reply after all the suspense, everyone besides the youngest boy fell over with astonishment.

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“Are you sure? Wouldn’t it have been good if you stayed there longer?”

“No, it is fine. Staying there any longer would have made the farewell difficult, so…”

After saying farewell to Tena’s family who kept inviting them to stay in their reluctance to part, Anri asked Tena that question.

“And also, right now my house… is the Black Rose Mansion.”

“…I see. Alright then.”

After those last words, a gentle silence filled the returning carriage.

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“U-, Um! I also think that your mask is cool, Anri-sama!”

“…Mn. Thanks.”

Even though it was supposed to be a moving reunion scene, because everybody was focused on Masked Anri, they couldn’t concentrate.

Side Story 6 – A Certain Demon King's Dinner Gathering

At present there were four girls living in the Black Rose Mansion.
Anri who was the lord of the estate, Tena who was her kin as well as the head maid, Lili who was like a younger sister that helped with the housework despite her age, and finally Leonora who was a sponger.
Among these four, Anri, Tena and Lili were permanent residents but in the end, Leonora was simply staying here temporarily.
As the daughter of the Demon King and the successor to his throne, once her moratorium journey was finished, she would be returning to the Demon Race Territory.
To begin with, there was no fixed date for the end of her journey, but she couldn't continue it forever.

She herself had placed the conditions for return as "obtaining some kind of merit".
And objectively speaking, she had already accomplished this.

She had helped with the establishment of a neighbouring nation, and had deep bonds with its VIPs. Additionally, this neighbouring nation shaved away land from the enemy nation, Fortera, and was constructed like a buffer. Furthermore, trade with the Human Race that had been previously deemed as impossible, was now possible through this new nation.
She had gained plenty enough merit as a successor to the throne.
As a result, it could be said that the message she had received was natural.

"You're returning to your country?"

"Yeah, they're starting to press me, you see."

At dinner, Leonora told Anri and the others about her motherland's inquiries about whether she was ready to return.

"It's pretty sudden."

“No, that’s not really true. They’ve implicitly brought it up before. I had decided to leave it alone until they straight out said it, but as you’d expect, I probably can’t stay here much longer this time.”

“I see…”

Because it was akin to Leonora admitting herself that she still wanted to stay here, she flushed a little red with embarrassment.

“So when will you be leaving, Leonora-san?”

“Let’s see. I’m planning on departing tomorrow.”

“T-, Tomorrow, you say?”

“Yeah. We’re pretty far from the Demon Race Territory after all.”

Leonora’s reply had shocked Tena. Certainly, this did seem quite sudden. But as Leonora had said, it would take a number of days to the Demon Race Territory. On top of that, it would take even more days from the border to the Demon King Castle. Because of that, it made sense that she needed to depart as soon as possible.

“And so, there’s something I want to ask… Won’t you come with me to visit the Demon Race Territory?”

“? Us?”

“Yeah. I’m inviting you as a friend. Naturally, you’re VIPs in a neighbouring country, and will be entertained as state guests.”

At present, Anri had no official power in the Holy Anri Thearchy, but realistically considering her connections, it wasn’t necessarily wrong to call her a VIP.
But in that case, they should have sent a request through the Holy Anri Thearchy, and not directly invited her like this.
In the end, the truth was that Leonora was simply inviting a friend to her house.

Leonora Romariel… As the heir to the Demon King’s Throne, she had always been friendless.

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The next day, Anri and Leonora visited the Evil God Temple.
Leonora had planned on inviting Anri, Tena and Lili, but Lili was still too young, and the long journey would not be good for her. Because of that, Tena was forced to stay back to look after her, and in the end only Anri would be going.

“Hey, Anri… Are we seriously riding that thing?”

“It’s faster this way.”

“Well, sure, but… but, you know…”

The two of them were here at the Evil God Temple to secure their means of transport.
Going by foot or carriage like normal people would take almost a month there and back, but now that Tena and Lili would be waiting at the Black Rose Estate, Anri didn’t want to take so long.
And so, she had chosen the fastest method of getting there. And she could find that method here.

Still, when Leonora had heard, she frowned unhappily.
She had told them that she would be departing today, but she never mentioned how she would be getting there. After all, she only found out today.
When Anri told her that they would be getting there in a day, she carelessly thought it would be teleportation magic or the like. That optimism had backfired on her. Thinking about it carefully, the divine race Anri aside, there was no way that the human Anri could have such a power.
There weren’t any more appointed communications with her country, but it was still possible to send an emergency communiqué to let them know first.
While Leonora was agonising over whether or not she should do it, it was already too late.

Having given up, Leonora sighed and muttered her faint hope.

“It’d be good if this didn’t cause an uproar at home, but…”

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Demon Race Territory, Demon King's Castle

Deep within the Demon Race Territory lay a castle. It belonged to the Demon King who reigned supreme within the Demon Race, and served as their supreme headquarters.
Although the war between the demons and humans had continued for a long time, the battles all took place near the borders, and not once had a human invaded as far as the Demon King Castle.
Despite this, its security showed no signs of negligence.
Many layers of large security nets protected the castle, and if an enemy army was ever spotted, the demonic forces were ready to intercept them at a moment's notice.

One day, an urgent message arrived at the castle from one the 'net' closest to the Human Race Territory.

"Your Majesty! Urgent news!"

"How noisy. What is going on?"

Eligor Romariel, the incumbent Demon King, had been in his office when a guard suddenly stormed in.

"Just a moment ago, we received news from one of the border forts! According to the report, a gargantuan dragon is making a beeline towards this castle!"

"A dragon, you say?"

"Yes, Sire! An ominous, jet black dragon."

The report silenced the Demon King, who had seemingly fallen into silent recollection of something. But before he could organise his thoughts, a question from the guard scattered them.

"What shall we do, Sire?"

"If it is navigating the skies then our security nets will be of no use. Have the troops gather in the direction of the dragon! Also, have Renarve, Vikuto, and Ijido come as well. I shall also head there immediately."

Giving a passing glance at the guard who hurried away, the Demon King began preparing his equipment.

imouto
By the time the Demon King had appeared in the castle's eastern quadrant, the guards had already finished preparing.
Troops with shields stood on the ground, and formed the vanguard to oppose the dragon's aerial attacks, whilst the mage troops stood within the castle walls. The frontline troops were to serve as a decoy, and the mages were to concentrate their attacks while the dragon was distracted.
Although they had suddenly been gathered here, the soldiers showed no signs of panic, and calmly arranged themselves. Their actions reflected the preparedness and level of training of the Demon Race.
And the ones who directly commanded them were the Four Heavenly Kings who served as the Demon King's close aides.

"Vanguard, how goes the preparation of your shields!"

"They are ready, Renarve-sama!"

"Mage Unit, I assume that all of you are here?"

"Yessir, everybody is present!"

Violent Gale Knight Renarve was commanding the frontline, whilst Bloodfrost General Vikuto was in charge of the backline. On the other hand, Adamantite Earth Demon Ijido was using earth magic to form a protective wall for the decoy frontline.

"How is your wall coming along?"

"Yeah, I'm all done here."

Ijido answered Vikuto with a smirk.
After that, the Demon King came along.

"Have you all finished preparing?"

"Why if it isn't His Majesty. Yes, we are all ready."

The Demon King responded with a nod, before looking up towards the Eastern skies. Renarve, Vikuto and Ijido too, had their eyes pinned to the skies.

“By our fastest estimates, it should be arriving any time now.”

“Honestly, on the day that our Princess is coming back…”

“Speaking of which, she’s leaving for home today, isn’t she.”

“Indeed. We received her message last night.”

“……”

“Your Majesty? Is something the matter?”

“No, only, I feel as though I have forgotten something, and yet…”

Once again, the Demon King fell into thought just as he did the time the guard interrupted. But once again, something interrupted him. This time however, that *something* was also the answer to his questions.
“!? We have a visual!”

Renarve spotted the incoming black mass and yelled to warned the troops.

“Is that it? …Hm?”

“That’s… Don’t tell me…”

“*That* dragon!?”
“Hahh? The heck are you guys on about?”

Because the Demon King, Renarve and Vikuto were all familiar with that figure, they immediately guessed the situation. It was the Black Dragon that they had once battled in the dungeon known as the “Holy Land of the Evil God”. And if they considered Leonora’s homecoming plans, it was simple to guess what was happening.
On the other hand, only Ijido was panicked from having no idea what was happening.

“Renarve-sama, Vikuto-sama, please give us the signal to attack!”

“W-, Wait a moment! You mustn’t attack!”

“Huh?”

“Riding that dragon is——”

The black shadow approached with incredible speed, and in no time transformed from a dot into a massive silhouette, and before long it easily crushed Ijido’s prided wall and landed with a boom.
The frontline soldiers hurriedly formed an arc before the dragon, but because their superiors had given no attack orders, they were standing there confused.
However, that confusion was met with Vikuto’s next line.

“——Princess Leonora!”

As though responding to his shout, a girl made herself visible from the blind spot on the Black Dragon’s back.
But unlike Vikuto’s words, that girl was not Leonora.

Naturally, everyone there had been looking at the Black Dragon.
And because of that, you could call it natural that everybody there turned to look a the girl.
The Demon King, Renarve, Vikuto, Ijido, everybody without exception looked at the girl. Or rather, they were forced to see her.

Glossy black hair, and a bewitching black rose dress. Light armour at her chest, and noble features on her face. Yet, what made far more of an impression were her eyes. Those black, murky eyes, so ominous that they caused hallucinations, were now overlooking everybody on scene, and gripping their hearts with terror.
It was *because* these troops were the elites of their race that they so deeply sensed her power. The Demon King had always been the strongest existence in their hearts. The mastodonian Black Dragon emitted an unbelievable sense of pressure. And yet the despair that the girl’s eyes elicited easily surpassed them both.
And the Demon King and his adjutants were no exception. Leaving Ijido aside, all the other members knew that this girl would be coming, and they knew from Leonora’s reports about the girl’s mystic eyes. But although they knew, they still found themselves unable to suppress the instinctual horror that their bodies felt.

Given the circumstances, anybody faint of heart would have immediately fled in panic. The fact that they were not a single soldier less was worthy of praise.
But their strength of heart instead cornered them. Their minds were telling them not to run, but their instincts were telling them to flee. The contradictory born from this wore away at their minds.

And eventually, unable to bear with the terror any longer, all of them naturally took the same pose. It was a pose where they placed both hands and knees on the ground, and lowered their head to match; the posture of greatest apology, passed down since ancient times.

“O-, Oi, Anri!? You’ve forgotten to put your mask on!”

“……Ah.”

Anri’s Mystic Eyes of Wicked Authority fully demonstrated the ‘average’ power that was capable of forcing a Demon King to dogeza.

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Things started with some trouble, but Anri put on her mask, and the dogeza festival came to an end.
The gathered troops dispersed, the two girls were invited into the castle, and just as originally planned, they had dinner with the Demon King. The participants were Anri, Demon King Eligor, Leonora, and the Heavenly Generals Renarve and Vikuto.

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Around that time, Ijido was busy repairing the damaged eastern grounds.

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“Fumu, it seems that as long as one does not look directly at them, the eyes have no effect.”

“I’ve put a mask on, so there it’s all fine now.”

While drinking the soup from the full course menu, the Demon King chatted with Anri. Because her mask was the type that covered only the eyes, there was no problem eating her food. The mask was an extraordinary item, designed so that although things were invisible from the outside, she could see clearly from within.
Because her mystic eyes only displayed an effect with eye contact, as long as she wore this mask, nobody would suddenly prostrate or run away from her.

“When you have that mask on, you seem just like a normal girl.”

“I *am* normal.”
“Heh. So a VIP of a thearchy who used to be an Evil God, and
is *still*acquainted with the divines, is what you would call a normal girl, huh.”
Like this, the dinner continued peacefully as the Demon King and Anri enjoyed their chat together.

imouto
imouto
Around that time, Black Dragon Vardneel had begun to help Ijido fix the ground. Making use of his huge body, he stepped down on the ground to harden it.

imouto
imouto
“Speaking of which, there is something I must thank you for.”

“Thank me for?”

“Umu. It is about my daughter, Leonora.”

“Fath-! Your Majesty!?”

Leonora had been quietly eating dinner on the side when she panicked from the topic suddenly changing to her.

“I was unable to prepare Leonora any friends. Even if I ordered somebody to, they would only be a retainer. You could hardly call them a true friend.”

“Father…”

“I wished to thank you for becoming her friend.”

“It isn’t something to thank me for. I’m the one who asked.”

“Heh, is that how it was.”

The Demon Princess, the Demon King, and the girl who was once an Evil God.
Each of them had unique positions in the world, but for this moment, they were simply a girl, her father, and her friend who had come for dinner.

imouto
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While this was happening, Ijido and Vardneel’s cooperation had somehow succeeded in restoring the eastern grounds.

imouto
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imouto
It should be noted that though Anri’s mask was the best method of sealing her mystic eyes, nothing came without a price. In exchange for the powerful effect of its enchantment, it also came with a curse.
Unlike the Tantou of the Wicked Demon, or the Black Clothes of the Evil God, it wasn’t as though she couldn’t take it off, but this mask——the Black Mask of Unsealing——had the annoying effect of unsealing the limiter on one’s emotions. To put it plainly, it made it difficult to control one’s feelings. Because of that, it had the result of blabbing out all sorts of things that one wouldn’t normally.

“I’m really glad that I met Leonora. I want to stay by her side forever.”

“A-, Anri!?”

“Muu… Isn’t that going a little far? Leonora is the heir to the throne, and so she must bear an heir, but…”

And so, although you would feel nothing about saying such things while the mask was on, the moment that you took it off, you would be assaulted with shame.

It was arranged for Anri to stay the night in the castle, but that evening she would end up writhing about atop her bed for quite a while.

imouto
imouto
Around that time, Ijido and Vardneel had begun to drink happily together.

imouto
imouto
imouto
imouto
“Umm, would it be all right if I asked a question?”

“What a coincidence, Renarve. I too had something to ask…”

Waiting for a break in the conversation, the previously silent Renarve and Vikuto suddenly spoke up together.

“Mn? What’s the matter, you two?”

The two of them were looking at Leonora’s chest together.

“W-, What’s with you two…?”

Because they were so openly staring at her, by reflex she covered her chest with the thing on her lap. But what they were staring at was not her bountiful breasts, but the thing that she used to cover it.

imouto
imouto
“”Why have you been holding that doll all this time?””

“Huh!? So I was! I’ve been carrying it all the time lately, so I forgot I even had it! Y-, You’re wrong… This isn’t by choice! There are some compelling circumstances behind this!”

What they were staring at was the doll that had been in Leonora’s hands, and that she was now using to hide her chest. Ever since she had returned here, she had always been carrying it around with her, so naturally passerbys had all noticed and wondered. Because of her status however, it wasn’t possible for them to casually ask her about it.

To be specific, the doll that she was carrying was the Symbol of Capture from the battle of three gods, the cursed Tena doll. Ever since she carelessly touched it, Anri had left the curse alone as punishment. Because she forgot about it and left the temple, afterwards it was harder for her to meet with the divine Anri, and the curse was never lifted.

"Fumu, I *did* tell you to find some more womanly hobbies but… is*that* your taste?"
"You're wrong! You're wrong, father!"

The cursed Tena doll was creepy no matter who you asked, and couldn't be considered girly no matter what.

"Leonora's become so fond of it that she won't part from it."

"Fumu, I see… But well, I will not do something as boorish as commenting on my daughter's taste and past-times."

"I said that was wrong…! Or rather, Anri! This is nine-tenths *your*fault, isn't it!?"
The rumours of the doll-carrying Demon Princess had quickly spread through the demons' lands, and by this point it was already impossible to suppress the rumours.
And this was how the legend of the Doll Princess began.

TL Note:
<Magic Flame Princess, Leonora>
With the achievement of establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy Anri Thearchy, she inherited the throne of the Demon King at a young age.
She became the mediator for the two nations, and was adored by even the humans, who were originally the enemy.
In addition, due to the fact that she was forced to continue holding the doll and was unable to part from it, she gained aliases such as "Doll Princess" and "The Truth Is, the Doll Is Her Real Body" etc.
"I told you that was wrong, didn't I!?"

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